



LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE

No. CLXXXIII.]

Contents

[JANUARY 1898

PAGE

189

The Duenna of a Genius. Chaps. I., II.	189
By M. E. FRANCIS (Mrs. FRANCIS BLUNDFILL), Author of 'In a North Country Village,' 'A Daughter of the Soil,' &c.	
The Tale of the Flint.	214
By A. M. BELL	
The Flight of a Soul.	226
By WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK	
The Last Crossing.	228
By HAROLD CHILD	
The Re-arisen Mother, or the Return of the Dead	243
By A. G. GILCHRIST	
The Author of 'Monsieur Tonson'	246
By AUSTIN DOBSON	
The Story of the 'Donna' from 1883 to 1897	256
I.—By the EDITOR.	
II.—By the AUTHOR of 'CHARLES LOWDER'	
At the Sign of the Ship	273
By ANDREW LANG	

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LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE.

JANUARY 1898.

The Duenna of a Genius.

BY M. E. FRANCIS (MRS. FRANCIS BLUNDELL),

AUTHOR OF 'IN A NORTH COUNTRY VILLAGE,'
'A DAUGHTER OF THE SOIL,' &c.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUZIONE.

'HAVE you put in the gun-case ?'

'Yes, Sir John.'

'And the golf-clubs ?'

'They are here in the corner, Sir John.'

'All right—go and take the tickets.'

Sturgess disappeared, and Sir John Croft began to pace the platform slowly ; looking round him albeit a trifle impatiently, for he found himself quite ten minutes too soon for his train. This was a circumstance which had seldom before occurred, and he felt naturally annoyed. He could not think what had possessed that stupid fellow Sturgess, who, as a rule, timed his arrivals and departures so exactly. Sir John liked to have precisely three minutes to spare when arriving at a station—one minute wherein to betake himself to the platform, another for the bookstall, a third in which to settle himself comfortably in a corner of the railway carriage. As for Sturgess—no valet was worth his salt who could not manage in three minutes to see to luggage, take tickets, and scramble into his place.

Sir John Croft felt these crumples in his bed of rose-leaves the more in that he was what the world called an exceptionally

fortunate man. He had been in possession of his baronetcy and property for about two years ; there were mines on this property, tin, or coal, or iron, his friends were not quite sure which, but, to make amends for their ignorance on this point, they always displayed an intimate knowledge of the amount of his income ; and even taking it for granted that they were kind enough to multiply it by three, or perchance by four, the fact was sufficiently patent to everyone : John Croft was colossally rich. Then he was young—not yet thirty-two—handsome, healthy, and, moreover, honestly interested in life and in his fellow-creatures. He had chosen the career of a diplomatist before his uncle's unexpected death had rendered it unnecessary for him to have any career at all, and, being a clever young man, with influential connections, had had many interesting experiences in foreign lands.

As he paced up and down the crowded Waterloo platform, his quick eye flitted from face to face with eager observation ; now and then a smile of amusement made his moustache twitch as he caught sentences at random among the throng, and all at once he wheeled round to look again at two figures who had just brushed past him. They were very small figures—two tiny dark-eyed women, who were talking rapidly in French. A second glance revealed that both were young and pretty, the beauty of one being particularly striking. The other, laden with shawls and packages, was now laboriously assisting her companion to climb into a third-class carriage.

‘*Tiens*—do not be so impatient ! I will get your paper directly.’

Croft walked on, wheeling as he reached the further end of the platform, and slowly retracing his steps. The face of the prettier French girl was pressed against the window-pane as he passed her carriage. What a charming face ! What long, strange, beautiful eyes ! what delicate features ! But how cross the small lady was ! Those finely pencilled brows were fiercely knit, the lips were pouting, and, through the open door, he could see the point of an impatient foot tapping on the carriage floor.

‘*Ah, ça*,’ she called out, ‘are you never coming back ? Make haste ! the train is just going to start.’

‘*J'arrive, chérie* ; see, I have brought you an evening paper.’

‘I told you to bring me *Punch*,’ cried the imperious voice from within the carriage.

John Croft paused a few paces away, feigning not to observe

the pair, but in reality amused and interested. Little woman No. 1 was looking out with a flushed and angry face; little woman No. 2 stood smiling by the door, holding out the paper for the other's acceptance.

'No, Valérie,' said No. 2 firmly, 'I will not buy you *Punch*; I told you I would not. It costs three times as much as this paper, which is quite as amusing. We have not money to throw away, remember.'

'I do not like,' returned Valérie, 'your nasty little paper. When it is not sneering, it is boasting.'

'Oh! oh!' cried the other, with a mock groan.

John Croft, in the background, raised his eyebrows, and was disposed to dispute this somewhat sweeping denunciation of his favourite evening journal.

'Besides,' pursued Valérie, pouting more than ever, 'I want pictures!'

'I will change this, if you like, for *Sc-r-raps*,' said No. 2, with such a funny emphasis on the word that Valérie laughed.

'No, I prefer *Ally Sloپair*.'

'Now do not be a child,' said No. 2; 'the train is really going to start—let me get in.'

This reminded Croft that it behoved him, too, to seek his place; he walked rapidly towards the carriage he had already chosen, but, as he was about to enter it, he saw something white whizz from the compartment which had so long engaged his attention. When the train started, a moment or two later, he looked out with some curiosity: just beside the spot where the girl he called No. 2 had been standing lay the despised newspaper.

Leaning back in his comfortable corner, and lighting his first cigarette, the young man suffered his thoughts to linger on these interesting, strange little Frenchwomen; French, at least, they would seem to be, judged by their tongue and a certain jauntiness of air and garb; yet something about them—the complexion, the shape of the face—above all, the setting of the eyes—seemed to belong rather to the Slavonic type. What of their station in life? They were travelling third class, poor things! and No. 2 seemed to do the combined work of maid, footman, and chaperon. He smiled as he remembered the recent discussion: no, they were certainly not well off; but nevertheless there was an air of refinement, even of distinction, about them, which would, under any circumstances, have betrayed that they were ladies. What were they doing? Whither were they going? They were very young

to be roaming the world alone ; No. 1, indeed, looked almost a child.

While he thus idly wondered and pondered the hours wore away : it was not really a very long journey, though Croft considered it a particularly tedious one, accomplishing it, nevertheless, two or three times a year. His aunt, Lady Mary Bracken, whom he was about to visit, was an original and charming woman ; and her house was, for his consolation, one of the pleasantest imaginable.

The abominable little junction at which it was necessary to change had been reached, and Croft, Sturgess, and their various paraphernalia transferred to another train, when, to Sir John's interest and amusement, he observed that his foreign fellow-travellers were also migrating from one platform to the other. When the train stopped at a small wayside station, the last before the one at which Croft meant to alight, he was surprised, on looking out, to behold them again, running along the platform, much encumbered with their various belongings, and apparently in a violent hurry. Seeing them wrestling with the stiff handle of the door of the neighbouring first-class compartment, Croft opened his own, towards which they immediately rushed.

'Get in, Valérie ; get in—quick !' cried the girl who appeared to be the leader ; 'I have but an instant to take the tickets.'

She flew away, breathless, and presently returned, holding two first-class tickets between her shining white teeth ; her purse being in one hand, while the other struggled vehemently with the carriage door, which an officious porter had an instant before been kind enough to close.

Sir John hastened to open it, and to help her to climb in, which she did just as the train was moving. She crossed to the further end of the carriage opposite her sister, and threw herself back in a seat, panting and laughing.

'If you had been left behind, Margot,' said Valérie, 'I would not have gone to that place at all.'

'*Si, si*,' said Margot, putting the tickets in her purse, which she closed with a snap ; 'you would have gone, Valérie, for our hostess would not otherwise have known what had become of us. I should have followed in a cab in time to dress you for dinner.'

Valérie sat upright, frowning for a moment ; then, leaning forward, she began to talk rapidly in another language—a language which fell familiarly on Croft's ears. It was Hungarian. Many a

time had he heard it of old. When he had been attached to the British Legation at Vienna he had even made a special study of it. So he was right in his surmise—these girls were not of Frankish origin. Now that he studied them afresh he could see that the eyes of the one called Margot—a pretty name, Margot—were of a deep blue, the blue he had often seen in Austria, differing from the blue eyes of his own countrywomen as a sapphire differs from a forget-me-not. It was their thick, long, black lashes which caused them to look so dark. In his pleased interest at the discovery of the girls' nationality he forgot that he was practically eavesdropping, for the strangers evidently considered themselves quite safe in discussing before him matters of an intimate and personal nature.

'Margot,' said Valérie, 'do you hear? I will not be dressed by a strange maid—if one comes, I shall lock my door.'

'Well, I hope one will not come, for it would be rude to refuse an offer that is kindly meant.'

'It will not be kindly meant. She will want to see what things we have got and how we are dressed—ah, and she will see the darns in my only silk petticoat! It is all patched, patched, patched—how can I allow a stranger to stare at it?'

It was at this juncture that Croft began to be conscious that the conversation was not meant for his ears, and to wonder nervously whether he ought not to confess his acquaintance with the tongue used with such blissful security. But he hesitated, dreading to bring the girls to confusion.

'I hate the curiosity of these English,' pursued Valérie; 'they look at us as if we belonged to quite another species—they stare as if we were little wild animals; they ask us questions—questions which we should not think of asking any but our most intimate friends! They make remarks—bah! I hate them!'

'Do not be so foolish, Valérie,' returned Margot, reddening, and throwing back her head with a little proud air which amused Croft, who was furtively watching from behind his newspaper. 'You speak as if we were inferior to these people.'

'So they think,' interrupted Valérie. 'Are we not artists? Are we not paid for coming here? Oh, I know what you would say, Ma'am'selle la Marquise; but, my dear, it is not birth which is respected in this country—it is money. And, *à propos* of money, there is another reason why I dislike this undertaking, Margot. It will cost us four times—ten times—what we shall gain by it. The coachman who drives us from the station; the nasty, big

footmen with their floured heads ; the housemaids ; the maid whom I shall *not* allow to dress me—they will all, all expect money ; and whatever we give, they will think it too little—*ach*, I wish we had not come !'

There was a long pause, Sir John presently stealing a glance at Margot, who sat very straight, looking a little pale, he thought, and extremely serious.

'I have thought over it,' she said, 'and I consider it wise to come—yes, in spite of all the expense. It is necessary for you, you see. You can never succeed unless you are known—this seemed to me a chance. Now'—in an altered tone—'we shall be getting out directly ; it would be well for you, I think, to change your gloves.'

Opening her bag, she took out two pairs of new gloves, beginning with great care and precision to remove those she wore, while her sister did the same. Croft remarked with a kind of compassionate amusement that those they took off were much worn and had been frequently mended. While Valérie was coaxing the buttons of one of the new pair to meet round her plump little wrist, she suddenly uttered an exclamation :—

'Margot, Margot ! my shoes—you never sewed the pink bows on my shoes !'

Margot paused, evidently stricken and contrite. 'It is true ; I have forgotten !'

'Everything goes wrong,' said Valérie, tragically. 'Every single thing ! Not even my little pink bows, that I had counted on ! Ah, Margot !'

'Beloved,' said Margot, almost with tears in her voice, 'I am so sorry that I should have forgotten ; but truly I will sew them on in time—they dine so late it will be easy.'

Valérie pouted still, as Croft observed, with gathering impatience. She was, if anything, the younger of the two ; and how imperious she was to her sister, how irrational, how spoilt ! But just at that moment Margot leaned forward and patted her hand ; whereupon the little lady banished the pout from her face, and replaced it by a smile—such a smile !—gracious, tender, disclosing the most fascinating and unexpected dimples ; the eyes, moreover, lighting up and laughing too, so sweetly, that Croft succumbed. She was spoilt, yes, but delicious !

His reflections were cut short by the train slackening speed, and presently all alighted together. There was the omnibus from Brackenhurst—why, his fellow-travellers were actually making

their way towards it under the guidance of a porter ! He could hear Margot stating in her pretty, foreign English that they were going to Lady Mary Bracken's. There was Sturgess, full of importance as usual, taking possession of the entire equipage, and installing his master's belongings in the most desirable corners ; apparently oblivious of the fact that the two ladies were waiting for him to withdraw his portly person from the doorway. An emphatic dig from Sir John's stick, accompanied by a curt admonition, soon removed the obstacle, and then Croft, raising his hat, remarked that he believed they were bound for the same place, and inquired if he could make himself of use.

‘ Thank you,’ said Margot, ‘ I think all our effects are already assembled.’

The quaint, rather deliberate English fell from her lips, Croft thought, more prettily than either of the languages which the sisters spoke so volubly ; he observed, as she looked up at him, that her eyes, though less large and brilliant than her sister's, had a greater charm of expression—*un regard voilé*, as she herself might have termed it.

He bowed and held back the door smilingly, while they entered ; Margot acknowledging the attention with a funny little, stately bow, while Valérie brushed past, holding her head very high, and wearing an air of haughty displeasure. Croft followed, rather at a loss to account for the little creature's airs and graces, and cudgelling his brains to discover in what he had managed to offend her.

He was not long left in doubt. Having taken up her position in the furthermost corner of the vehicle, she again addressed her sister in Hungarian, her eyes flashing fire, her lips quivering with excitement :—

‘ I could die with shame, Margot ! He also comes with us. What possessed you to get into his carriage when the whole train was open to us ? ’

‘ But why not ? ’ returned Margot, opening her eyes very wide. ‘ There is nothing amiss with the young man—why should we shun him ? ’

Croft with difficulty restrained a grateful glance in her direction. Why, indeed, had this unreasonable being taken a dislike to him ? He on his part was disposed to be particularly amiable.

‘ Do you ask ? ’ cried Valérie, her small hands clutching themselves on her lap. ‘ Did he not see us getting into a third-class

carriage in London? I saw him watching us when you were so long absent buying your stupid paper—ah! all our little plan is now of no use! We might just as well have travelled third class all the way—he will tell everyone he saw us changing just at the last station; he was looking out when you were getting the tickets—I saw him. Is it not like you, Margot? He is the only one in all that train-full of people who is coming here, and you must choose his carriage!'

'My dear, the door happened to be partly open,' returned Margot in a deprecating tone. 'Do not make yourself unhappy. I daresay, though you fancy it, he did not really observe us.'

'Do not speak to me,' cried Valérie. 'He also saw us changing our gloves; he watched us—I saw him. He was smiling to himself behind his newspaper.'

'That is certainly unfortunate,' returned Margot, in tones of such deep depression that Croft felt a monster of duplicity and guilt. If they guessed that he had understood all their confidences to each other! that he even knew about the only silk petticoat!

With an impatient shrug of her shoulders Valérie threw herself back in her corner; and Croft, to break the awkward silence which ensued, endeavoured presently to engage the elder sister in conversation. She answered him politely, but somewhat absently, and there was a latent trouble in her face which caused him to feel more and more ill at ease. If he could only assure them that he would not for worlds betray their little secrets! But to do so was, of course, impossible.

From Margot's somewhat exiguous answers to his insinuating questions he learnt, however, that they had not been long in England, that they lived in London, that they knew Lady Mary Bracken slightly, and that they intended to remain about a week at Brackenhurst.

'My aunt is giving one of her large charitable entertainments, is she not?' he asked by-and-by. 'As a rule, one rather dreads them. Do you happen to know what institution is to be benefited this time? Is it the Model Hospital or the Night School?'

'I really do not know,' returned Margot, shrugging her shoulders, with a smile; a very sweet smile, though perhaps less fascinating than her sister's. Her face did not seem, like Valérie's, to sparkle all over, and only one dimple was revealed; John Croft observed, moreover, that the eyes remained thoughtful and even sad. Did they never laugh? he wondered. Now, what could these

little people be? Artists they called themselves. There were many varieties of the species. Were they actresses? He dismissed the suggestion as soon as it occurred to him, and yet he knew that among the items of Lady Mary's charitable bill of fare was included a play. But there was also to be a concert—perhaps they were musicians.

'I believe there is to be a concert on Wednesday,' he hazarded, this time addressing the younger sister. 'I am quite looking forward to it.'

Instead of answering him, she sprang up, clapping her hands together. 'Ah, my Cremona!' she cried. 'Margot, Margot, you have left it behind! Ah! now, indeed, it only remains for me to die!' Tears suddenly leaped to her eyes, and she wrung her hands piteously.

'No, no, it is quite safe,' returned Margot eagerly; 'I saw the man carry it down myself—it must be here, surely.'

Valérie pounced upon the piled-up goods on the opposite side of the omnibus, and dragged the neat heap asunder, overturning Croft's dressing-bag and throwing down his golf-clubs.

'What is the matter?' cried Sir John, looking about him in surprise and alarm; he had not quite caught the drift of Valérie's lamentations.

'My sister cannot find her violin,' explained Margot, almost as much perturbed as she. 'I am sure I saw the porter put it in; but it is perhaps outside?'

'Outside!' cried Valérie, volumes of wrath and woe in her tone. Then, suddenly letting down the window, she shrieked to the coachman to stop. All was confusion for a moment; but presently the treasure was discovered safely ensconced behind the coachman's legs, where Sturgess had thoughtfully bestowed it, that there might be more room within the vehicle for his master and his belongings.

'Give it to me!' cried Valérie, almost inarticulately; the tears were rolling down her cheek, and she was quite pale.

Sturgess, immensely astonished, clambered down from his post, and handed in a shabby little black case through the window. Sir John breathed a parting aspiration after him as he retired, and then apologised very humbly to his fellow-travellers for the man's officiousness.

Margot made a pretty and polite disclaimer, but Valérie did not appear to hear. She sat hugging the battered old case tightly in her arms, and occasionally kissing it.

Shortly after this little episode the carriage turned in at a long wooden gate painted black and white.

‘Very funeral, is it not?’ remarked Sir John. ‘Black and white are the family colours. It is my aunt’s mania to paint everything black and white that can be painted!’

Margot smiled; and John, looking at her, saw that she was pale, and that the small hands folded on her lap were shaking, doubtless with nervousness. He went on babbling pleasantly in a way which did not require response while they drove along an avenue bordered at each side by black and white railings, and then past a black and white lodge, halting finally before a long white house with a black door.

Croft helped the sisters to alight, observing with pity that the elder one trembled so that she could scarcely stand, and longing to say something reassuring. Valérie, however, appeared quite unconcerned, and continued to clutch her violin, though a footman offered to relieve her of it. In another moment they found themselves in the library, where Lady Mary Bracken and her guests were having tea.

The hostess was a tall old lady, with sandy hair, and a black lace bonnet, worn very much at the back of her head.

‘You have come!’ she observed, nodding at her nephew; then, to the little sisters, ‘You have come, too. Why didn’t you leave your fiddle in the hall?’

‘I preferred to bring my violin in here with me,’ said Valérie deliberately. ‘It might be roughly handled by people who did not know.’

She looked a very mite among the many tall women present, all of whom were gazing at her curiously; but she did not seem in the least perturbed.

‘Well, don’t tune it in here, that’s all,’ said Lady Mary; ‘can’t bear the sound of a fiddle being tuned! Now sit down, all of you; I am sure you are tired and must want your tea.’

Valérie instantly popped herself down on the nearest chair. Margot looked shyly round, and, finding no other vacant, stood quietly beside her sister.

‘You haven’t got a chair,’ cried their hostess, as she returned from the tea-table, bearing aloft two cups. ‘Here, get up, Rosamond—you haven’t had a long journey to-day! Give your chair to Mademoiselle Kostolitz.’

The lady addressed—a tall, fair girl with a handsome face, quite sufficiently rouged—slowly hoisted her long languid person

from the seat in question ; glancing round meanwhile with an expression which had in it as much of insolence as curiosity, but continuing all the time the conversation in which she had been engaged when Lady Mary had addressed her.

Margot sat down. Sir John Croft, who was at that time approaching the sisters with cake and bread-and-butter, saw a wave of colour pass over the face which had been so pale, while the small features assumed a set expression. She was evidently rallying her self-command, and answered him composedly when he made some trivial remark.

‘Can I not persuade you, Mademoiselle,’ he said, addressing Valérie, ‘to let me take care of that violin while you eat your bread-and-butter ?’

‘I do not trust you sufficiently,’ she replied, uplifting large defiant eyes.

‘I assure you,’ said Croft, ‘I am a most reliable person—ask my aunt. Why, I manage the accounts of her charitable institutions for her, sometimes.’

‘And make up the deficit at the end of the year ?’ put in the tall girl whom Lady Mary had called Rosamond, gazing calmly at Sir John over the top of Margot’s head.

Croft took no notice whatever of the interruption. ‘I will guarantee,’ he said pleadingly to Valérie, ‘to dandle your Cremona as tenderly as if it were a baby !’

‘I do not approve of my Cremona being dandled,’ said Valérie, with a scornful emphasis on the word. ‘But if you hold it as reverently as—what shall I say ?—as your Prayer Book in church, I will entrust it to you !’

‘I am not sure that Sir John does not occasionally let his Prayer Book fall in church,’ observed Lady Rosamond, apparently addressing no one in particular.

At this moment Lady Mary Bracken came fussing up. ‘Would you like to be introduced ?’ she asked her nephew in a very audible aside : then, without waiting for an answer, ‘Sir John Croft, Miss Valérie Kostolitz—the other Miss Kostolitz—I never can remember *your* name—you’ll excuse me.’

‘We are quite old acquaintances already,’ rejoined Croft pleasantly.

Valérie threw him a savage glance, but he did not appear to notice it, continuing blandly : ‘We met at the station, did we not ? And drove out in the omnibus together, which is quite sufficient introduction for anybody.’

'Nevertheless,' said Valérie with a deliberate uptilting of her dimpled chin, which, as he subsequently observed, was a frequent gesture with her, 'it is always more convenient to know a person's name.'

Croft bowed, still tenderly nursing the violin, and answered with his most engaging smile: 'An introduction is certainly an advantage when one is not a celebrity. Now everyone, of course, has heard of Mademoiselle Kostolitz.'

He intended to say something very pretty, but his remark fell disappointingly flat. The two sisters coloured up to the roots of their hair, and his aunt interposed bluntly, 'Don't talk nonsense. She has only just come over, and has not been heard of anywhere yet.'

Valérie put down her cup, and extended an imperative hand. 'My violin, please,' she said, drily.

'Give it to her, John; give it to her,' cried Lady Mary. 'They will want to go upstairs now, and unpack. You'll want to unpack, won't you? Or shall I send my maid?'

Croft, mindful of the colloquy in the railway carriage, and feeling a little sore after his recent rebuff, was conscious of a certain malicious curiosity as to how his fellow-travellers would take the suggestion. With grave dignity, however, and no apparent sign of embarrassment the elder sister declined the proposal.

'I thought very likely you wouldn't,' rejoined Lady Mary. 'People don't care to have strange maids ferreting about among their things, do they?'

The remark was so odd, so blunt, and withal so pertinent, that John Croft actually felt himself blushing. To his surprise and alarm he caught Valérie's eyes fixed on him with an expression of indignant surprise.

CHAPTER II.

STACCATO.

WHEN Croft entered the drawing-room before dinner he found, to his great satisfaction, that his aunt was alone.

'Just what I wanted,' he observed, sitting down beside her on the sofa. 'I came down early on purpose to have a chat with

you. I know you are always ready ages before everyone else. Now, tell me, who are those nice little people, and why are they here ?'

' You mean my fiddling girl—isn't she pretty ? Her sister is a nice little thing, too. My dear, they tell me she plays divinely ; the other one, I mean. The sister just accompanies her, and looks after her. She seems to manage everything for her ; she is the duenna, in fact.'

' I see ; and how did you come across them ?'

' Well, by a curious chance Marian told me. You know my great friend, Mrs. Wilberforce ? My dear John'—suddenly assuming a dolorous tone—' I must tell you affairs have been going dreadfully badly down here. Really, I have had so much worry and bother, and the accounts have got so dreadfully muddled up—'

' What ! ' interrupted Sir John with a laugh, ' doesn't the Model Hospital pay ? I thought it was doing splendidly.'

' My dear boy, it couldn't be doing worse. The fact is'—growing voluble and confidential—' the country people here are so stupid they don't understand that kind of thing. They won't go to the hospital because they say the doctors will be playing games with them while they are alive, and cutting them up after they are dead. I assure you, John, one woman said so to me perfectly seriously. It seems a brother of hers had died in a hospital once—she told me all about it—all sorts of details. However, in short, there was a post-mortem, " And only think, my lady," she said, " our poor Tom had to go and meet his God without his inside ! " '

John laughed again, and crossed one leg over the other.

' Tell me,' he was beginning ; but Lady Mary continued, without heeding him :

' Their ignorance is perfectly incredible ! Fancy, I asked one of them the other day what she would do if her child burnt itself or got badly scalded ; and she said, " Hold it under the pump ! " Doesn't that make you shudder ? I saw that something must be done, and then I had what was really a splendid idea—the Mothers' Training Guild—isn't it a good name ? I have classes, you know, for the village women ; ambulance lectures that they can all understand, very simple and easy. They are taught how to bandage an injured limb, how to dress a burn, how to make a sick-bed. Then they have simple lessons in invalid cookery ; they learn to steam soles and to make chicken broth—'

‘Soles and chicken broth !’ repeated John, raising his eyebrows slightly.

‘Yes, simple things of that kind. Don’t you think it very useful ?’

‘Most useful and practical, my dear aunt. I suppose the husbands earn about twelve or fourteen shillings a week. Wages are low here, aren’t they ?’

‘I am sure I don’t know what they earn. But listen, John,’ again mounting her hobby and cantering off at full speed. ‘Then they have lessons in sewing ; they are taught how to cut out and make their own clothes and their children’s. I supply the stuff, you know, and they are allowed to take the things home after they are made ; and I let them have the jellies and soups and things, just to encourage them and give their belongings an idea of how things ought to be done. Well, I assure you, John, this plan was successful from the first ; the women simply *flocked* to my classes. After the first fortnight I had to increase my staff of teachers ; and the schoolroom—I used to hold my classes in the schoolroom after schooltime, of course—well, the schoolroom wouldn’t hold them all. And I was so proud and so confident, my dear John, that I built a house with a large lecture-room, and kitchens, and a laundry—oh ! I forgot to tell you they are taught to wash too—and it is all working splendidly, but—’

‘I quite understand,’ interrupted John, who had been fidgeting during this long explanation. ‘The financial part of the affair is not quite so satisfactory as the rest ; so you have got up this bazaar and concert, and Mademoiselle Kostolitz is to be one of the attractions.’

‘Exactly,’ responded Lady Mary, much gratified at his prompt apprehension of the state of affairs. ‘You see, having to supply materials for all the departments makes it rather expensive, and the building came to more than I anticipated. Of course, later on, when the Guild is in full working order, it will finance itself. Each member will have to pay an entrance-fee and an annual subscription ; but at present I don’t want to discourage the poor things.’

‘I think you are *quite* right,’ said her nephew, emphatically. ‘And so you had the happy thought ?’

‘I had the happy thought of having a concert and theatrical entertainment. You see, I have had so many bazaars ; and last time, when I had one for the Night School, it was a dead failure. So I was delighted when Marian Wilberforce wrote and told me

she had found something quite new for my entertainment. Stop; I think I have her letter here.'

Lady Mary now stalked majestically across the room, and opened the drawer of a small table.

'Yes, here it is; now I will read it to you: "I have found the very thing you want—an attraction quite new, and not at all expensive."

John felt a sudden pang of pity.

"I have come across the prettiest little pair of foreigners—French or Hungarian, I am not sure which; the name is Kostolitz."

'Certainly that's not French,' said John.

"One of them is quite a genius," continued his aunt, without noticing the interruption; "she plays the violin divinely, and recites like an angel. They tell me she can act, too, though she does not wish to go on the stage. They have just come to London, and know nobody; therefore now is your time. You could have them for nothing, I know. As the other sister told me, they are most anxious to make a connection. They intend to give lessons at first—one of them does, at least—just to support themselves, until the younger one makes her *début* in due form. 'I want to produce my sister properly,' the elder one said to me; 'she is a genius.' I thought it so quaint of her. You really need not be afraid to have them. They are quite presentable, and I think very retiring.'

John arched his eyebrows. This was not the word he would have chosen to apply to Mademoiselle Valérie; though, on the other hand, certainly no one could accuse her of putting herself forward.

'So I just thought I'd try them,' said Lady Mary, folding up the letter and putting it in her pocket. 'We'll make the little one play this evening.'

At this moment the door was thrown open and the butler announced, 'Mr. Tory.'

'The curate,' said Lady Mary in a hasty aside. 'I asked him on purpose to take one of them in to dinner. The other is going in with Algy. He is furious, because he's afraid he'll have to talk French. How do you do, Mr. Tory? You know my nephew, Sir John Croft?'

Mr. Tory, a tall gaunt young man, whose habitual terror of Lady Mary Bracken was on this occasion increased by the appearance of this somewhat formidable nephew—John's countenance at that moment bore a distinctly forbidding expression—advanced

nervously to the fireside and made some incoherent remark. John turned suddenly to his aunt.

'I hope Algy will behave himself. I think it is scarcely civil to send one of those girls in with a boy in round jackets.'

'He is in tails now,' returned Lady Mary—'tails, this half; he is nearly seventeen, you know.'

'Can't you let me take her in?' persisted John, discontentedly.

'My dear John, don't be an idiot. You've got to take Rosamond Gorst.'

Further discussion was prevented by the entrance of the last-named lady, followed quickly by the other guests. It was a curious fact that, though everybody disapproved of Lady Mary's charitable speculations, she was invariably able to collect as large a party as her house would hold to witness her entertainments for their benefit. She exercised, indeed, an odd empire over all with whom she came in contact. Her bluntness and plain-speaking were proverbial; her *brusquerie* of manner took away one's breath at times, but nobody ever dreamed of being offended with her; and, though people occasionally grumbled, they generally succumbed to her influence. Not less noticeable than this curious sway of hers was the fact that, whatever strange fancies she might take into her head, however extraordinary her behaviour or rude her speech, no one had ever been known to take a liberty with her. Perhaps this was partly due to the circumstance that she was the daughter of a duke; and though she might occasionally choose to go down on her knees in order to give some slovenly cottage housewife a lesson in floor-scrubbing, and, moreover, frequently wore hobnailed boots that would better have graced a ploughman, she invariably conveyed the impression that she was every inch a great lady.

The Kostolitzes were among the last to enter the drawing-room. Every eye was turned on them as they appeared, and there was a momentary silence. Valérie was dressed in pink and Margot in yellow. Their dresses, though very simple in material, had a certain quaint elegance of make; their pretty hair was fantastically dressed, and adorned with sparkling combs of imitative jewels. As they stood together, in their brightly-tinted dresses, their faces a little flushed and excited, their brilliant eyes roving round the room, they looked, among the taller, paler country damsels, most of whom were robed in white, like some glowing exotics transplanted into an English garden.

One of Lady Mary's brothers, a somewhat morose-looking personage, did duty as host. It was his son, the Eton boy Algy, who was told off to take Margot Kostolitz in to dinner, while Valérie, who, as a genius, took precedence of her elder sister, was bestowed on Mr. Tory.

Mr. Tory was exceedingly young—a very hobbledehoy among curates, in fact—as yet unmellowed by parish work or croquet ; he wore pince-nez with glasses of a bluish tint ; he was very shy and preternaturally solemn ; and when he advanced to Valérie, jerkily extending an angular arm, his heart was sick within him at the thought of providing conversation for this sparkling little foreigner. Valérie, however, soon put him out of pain. Looking at him critically from beneath her long, dark eyelashes, she inquired with laborious slowness and distinctness :

‘ Do you—spik— Magyar ?—I mean, ‘Ungarian ?’

With profound alarm and astonishment the youth hastened to reply in the negative.

Valérie raised her plump shoulders with a deprecating shrug, and heaved a deep sigh. Then she slowly shook her head, and proceeded to examine the menu.

John Croft, from the opposite side of the table, witnessed this comedy, and smiled to himself. The naughty perverse little creature ! She could speak English as well as anybody when she chose, but she evidently did not choose. Her next neighbour was a local magnate who particularly disapproved, as Sir John knew, of Lady Mary Bracken's charitable speculations, and was of opinion that she was pauperising the county. He would not be likely to bestow much of his conversation on her foreign importation. Indeed, after one glance of intense disfavour, he turned a large and protesting shoulder upon it. Valérie glanced at him with another shrug, ever so slight, and devoted herself to her dinner. Not one word of any kind did she utter during the progress of that meal. Then what had begun in mischievousness and perverseness ended in sulks. The black brows drew themselves together, the red under-lip protruded ; she would not even eat now, but sat furling and unfurling her fan in as pretty a fit of temper as ever a spoilt child indulged in.

John Croft, leaning back in his chair, looked down the table to see how it fared with the other sister. She had seemed to be enjoying herself at first ; Croft had several times caught laughing words and phrases which intimated that she was getting on very well with her Eton boy. Indeed, the latter, who had obeyed some-

what reluctantly his aunt's injunction to give his arm to the second Mademoiselle Thing-um-a-jig, had discovered after five minutes that the latter was a very good sort. As the meal progressed he became quite confidential, and Margot had at first been immensely amused. Now, however, she looked absent, not to say anxious. Once or twice Croft saw her telegraphing little piteous signals to her sister, and observed that she received only stony defiance in return. Once he actually intercepted a grimace. He was endeavouring to observe the consequent effect on Margot, when Lady Rosamond suddenly turned towards him.

'You must crane back your neck a little farther this time,' she observed icily; 'Lady Lee's head-dress intervenes.'

Croft was too self-possessed to start, but was annoyed to feel himself colouring slightly.

'You seem to find the back of that young woman's head very interesting,' pursued Lady Rosamond.

'It was not the back of her head in particular—it was her face I wanted to see; but the back of her head is interesting too.'

'Especially the glass-beaded comb, I should think.'

'Yes, the glass-beaded comb is pretty, and worn as no English girl could wear it.'

'I wonder wherein lies the secret of the fascination which these little persons seem to have for you. I have found it most amusing to watch you this evening; when you have not been staring at one, you have been staring at the other.'

'So glad you found me amusing,' said Croft, lazily.

'Well, but what does their charm consist in?'

'Oh, I don't know. There is something new and fresh and fascinating about them. It is rather refreshing, don't you think, to come across something new now and then?'

'I am afraid,' said Lady Rosamond, archly, 'your taste has been vitiated by your long residence in foreign countries. But you have had time to get acclimatised now.'

'Oh, I am more than acclimatised,' said Croft with a suavely impertinent smile; 'I am getting rather bored.'

Lady Rosamond was the daughter of Lady Mary Bracken's brother, while Sir John was the nephew of her deceased husband; therefore the two were in a manner connected, and accustomed to meet on intimate terms. It is possible that Lady Rosamond may have desired to become yet more closely connected with the young baronet, who was such a very excellent *parti*; at all events, she was

too much interested in him to witness without discomposure his notice of the little foreigners. His last remark necessarily elicited a good deal of natural resentment, and she was about to deliver an exceedingly sarcastic repartee when the ladies rose, and she lost her opportunity.

One of the dowagers dropped her fan in the hall, causing a momentary delay. Valérie and Margot were thus obliged to halt within the room.

‘*Qu’as-tu donc, Valérie?*’ Croft heard the latter murmur. ‘*Tu n’as pas adressé ton pauvre Révérend une seule fois?*’

‘*Je le déteste,*’ was the curt and energetic rejoinder.

‘*Mais songes donc, chérie—*’

‘*Je m’embête ici,*’ muttered Valérie in a fierce whisper; and then the little procession moved on, and Croft closed the door.

On entering the drawing-room, a short time later, he went straight up to the younger sister, whom he found sitting a little apart, all efforts to engage her in conversation having failed. Some of the ladies present had at first endeavoured in a patronising way to make friends with her; one or two had even been so condescending as to address her in exceedingly bad French, oblivious of the fact that she spoke English with great ease and fluency; but Valérie had been obdurate, and responded so curtly that they had transferred their attentions to Margot, who, more than anxious to secure their good opinion on her sister’s behalf, had quietly and eagerly responded.

‘I want to know,’ said Sir John, sitting down on the sofa beside Valérie, ‘how soon you are going to get rid of that little black dog?’

‘What little black dog?’—raising her eyes with a swift, unsmiling glance.

‘The little black dog who is at present seated upon your shoulder. Don’t you know the phrase? It has been familiar to me since my nursery days. We say that a person has a black dog on his shoulder when we mean to imply that he is out of temper.’

‘How very rude!’ said Valérie, with one faint dimple beginning to show at the corner of her mouth. ‘Why do you think I am out of temper?’

‘I am afraid I must again quote the language of the nursery,’ replied Croft. ‘Because you are.’

‘Well, I am,’ agreed Valérie, nodding, while the dimple was suddenly reinforced by several others.

‘Come, you are at least candid,’ said Sir John. ‘Now, tell me, why are you out of temper?’

The dimples disappeared, and the frown came back.

‘Because I hate this house and everybody in it. My sister would come, though I told her it was a silly idea. Just look round this room, and tell me if a single person here knows anything about music. One lady told me her daughters had grounded with Chopin and Beethoven, and now she was going to have them taught *la Musique de danse*. You should have heard her *la Mewsique de dangse*,’ with a pitiless imitation of the good lady’s strongly British intonation. ‘These are all stupid, stupid, stupid!’

‘Well, I suppose most of them are,’ said Croft, looking round the room. ‘Not all, though. There is Lady Rosamond Gorst.’

‘Bah!’ interrupted Valérie; ‘do not tell me *she* can appreciate music.’ The colour suddenly flamed over the little creature’s face. ‘In London, at least,’ she said, ‘an artist, even though little known, is treated with politeness—is appreciated, in fact. People know you must have something in you to *be* an artist. But these people here—they think, because you have to gain your life, you are something inferior; they think they can take liberties with you.’

‘Mademoiselle,’ said Croft gently, ‘do not be so severe—you frighten me! Let me assure you that I am very fond of music, and that I can appreciate an artist very much.’ He bent over her as he spoke, until his eyes were almost on a level with hers. There was something frank and engaging in look and tone, even more than in the words, which won Valérie’s heart. She looked up smiling; leaning back at the same time, as though prepared to enjoy the conversation. As she did so she unconsciously extended two minute feet encased in dainty bronze shoes. Croft looked down at them, as any other man in his case would inevitably have done, and saw that the little shoes in question were adorned with pretty pink bows.

‘So there was time to sew them on, after all,’ he exclaimed, almost involuntarily.

Valérie sat bolt upright again, gazing at him with a face in which boundless astonishment was mingled with indignation.

‘What do you mean?’ she cried; ‘is it possible that you—that you understand Hungarian?’

Croft grew suddenly crimson. ‘I was some years Attaché at

Vienna,' he said humbly. 'I am afraid I do understand Hungarian rather well.'

Valérie's great dark eyes seemed positively to flame with wrath; the wave of scarlet which had overspread her cheeks swept now over neck and brow.

'Then you—you actually heard what we were talking about in the train!' she exclaimed, in a broken and agitated whisper.

'I understood every word,' said John miserably.

'It was dishonourable!' burst out Valérie.

John Croft pulled himself together. 'Very good,' he said, 'we will take that for granted. But just tell me, mademoiselle, what would have been your feelings if, in the middle of your remarks to each other, I had suddenly announced that I was a party to your confidences. Now, candidly, don't you think the situation would have been a little awkward? Remember that I could by no possibility relieve you of my presence, and that unless I had put my fingers in my ears I could not have avoided hearing what you said. I did all I could not to listen, I assure you; I even crackled my newspaper as hard as I could, to drown the sound of your voices.'

Valérie had no small sense of humour, and hereupon she began to laugh.

'I remember your crackling your paper.'

John followed up the advantage quickly. 'Remember, too, I had no idea that you were coming to stay at Brackenhurst,' he pleaded. 'It never even occurred to me that we should meet again. Come, don't you think it is rather unjust of you to be angry with me?'

'I am not angry now,' said Valérie, becoming calm as suddenly as she had before flared up. 'It is rather amusing that you understand Hungarian. Let us talk Hungarian now, and we can say nasty things of everyone here without their knowing it.'

But before this amiable little project could be put into execution Lady Mary Bracken marched across the room.

'We want to have a little music,' she said. 'Where is your fiddle, mademoiselle?'

'I understood the concert was to be to-morrow,' said Valérie doggedly.

'Yes, the concert is to be to-morrow, but we hope you will play to us to-night.'

'I am tired to-night,' returned Valérie, rebelliously.

Margot came flying across the room.

'You will play, *ma mignonne*,' she pleaded caressingly. 'Lady Mary Bracken's friends would like to hear you.'

Valérie slowly fanned herself, but made no reply.

'Do play,' said Sir John, so low that no one but she herself heard; 'it will show that you bear me no ill-will.'

Meeting his kind, merry gaze, she relented and rose, announcing that she must fetch her violin.

'Shall I send for it?' said Lady Mary. 'No, perhaps you would rather fetch it yourself, and then you can tune it upstairs, you know. I can't endure the sound of a fiddle being tuned.'

Valérie left the room without appearing to hear her, and presently returned with the violin in its case, walking straight up to Margot, who had already installed herself at the piano.

'Give me the note,' she said briefly, proceeding to draw forth a series of excruciating sounds, during which Lady Mary kept up a continuous stream of protests. Then she began a Russian air with variations. Croft had been prepared for something very good, but he had not expected anything quite so excellent as this. There was no doubt about it: Valérie Kostolitz was a great artist. He marvelled at the power of the little creature. What passion! what fire! While she played she seemed to forget everybody and everything, except her art; her face was transfigured, her eyes dilated; she had even a majesty of bearing with which no one could have credited her. It was as though she were actually uplifted by her own genius. She ceased abruptly, casting a swift glance round—eager, almost appealing.

For a moment there was silence in the room, and then a feeble 'Charming!' came from a remote corner. Lady Mary, who had begun by listening very intently—feeling that much would depend on the success of her *protégée* on the morrow—had, before the performance was half over, been accosted by a neighbour, and was now carrying on a brisk conversation in which the words 'district nurse' frequently occurred. One lady, looking critically at Valérie through her eyeglass, murmured audibly that she liked something with more tune in it; while an old gentleman observed that he thought there was nothing like a banjo for a drawing-room—*his* girls were going to learn the banjo, he said. Valérie fixed her eye for a moment on Rosamond Gorst, who languidly returned the glance and proceeded to smother a yawn: then she looked at Croft.

'You at least liked it?' she said interrogatively.

'Yes, I liked it.'

‘Then I will play for you again, another time. Now these people shall have something they can understand.’

She began to play again, Margot, after one scared and bewildered glance, dropping her hands from the piano.

Amid many quaint twirls and flourishes an air that was horribly, ludicrously familiar to Croft sounded through the room.

It was a wonderful performance, no doubt. The variations were admirable, the humour extraordinary. But then the audacity of it! Croft actually felt himself crimsoning. Margot, after a moment, seemed to rally her self-possession, and—infected by her sister’s spirit of mockery, it would seem—struck now and then a quaint chord, which oddly enhanced the grotesqueness of the performance. Nobody was talking now; everyone listened with an astonished, almost startled expression; the old gentleman who had expressed his preference for the banjo as a musical instrument nodded his head in time. Lady Mary was smiling, with a somewhat puzzled air; while Rosamond Gorst stared with haughty surprise at the performers. Presently Valérie with a final roulade ceased, and Lady Mary rose to her feet.

‘Thank you very much. That really is pretty—the odd thing is I seem to know it so well.’

‘I should think everyone knew it,’ said another lady, somewhat tartly.

‘Well, for the moment I actually thought—only, of course, it can’t be—’

‘It’s “Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,”’ said Algy, admiringly, from the other side of the room; ‘jolly tune, isn’t it?’

‘You silly fellow!’ said his aunt. ‘Seriously, Mademoiselle Kostolitz, there is something which recalls—’

‘It is “Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay,”’ remarked Valérie, with perfect gravity.

‘Dear me!’ said Lady Mary; ‘I thought I recognised it. We all recognised it, didn’t we?’—looking delightedly round. ‘Do you know, really, when one hears it like that it’s a very pretty air. The setting, of course, is a little different—I suppose you set it yourself?’

‘Yes,’ said Valérie complacently, ‘the arrangement is my own. I thought it would be a good thing to play something which everybody knew.’

‘Capital idea,’ said the banjo gentleman.

‘The arrangement is very original,’ said one lady.

'But it is a pity,' murmured another, 'she should have chosen quite such a vulgar air!'

Meanwhile Valérie stood apparently unconscious of these comments, and somewhat distractedly tuning her violin, to the renewed discomfort of Lady Mary Bracken.

'Valérie, how could you?' murmured Margot under her breath, taking advantage of the renewed buzz of conversation. 'See how I tremble! When there is so much at stake!'

'Leave me alone,' said Valérie; then, lifting her eyes swiftly to Croft's face, 'What did *you* think?'

'If I tell you, you will not be pleased.'

'Nevertheless I wish to know.'

'Well, then,' said Sir John, very gravely, 'I thought it somewhat impertinent.'

She coloured, but presently shrugged her shoulders. 'Impertinent! What a word! I made an experiment *qui a, du reste, complètement réussi*. Do you not,' with a charming smile, 'think it kind, after all, to endeavour to adapt oneself to other people's taste, even if one may not comprehend it?'

'Even,' said Sir John, who was still grave, and still, oddly enough, appeared to consider himself personally affronted by Valérie's selection, 'even if in so doing you yourself are betrayed into a slight lapse from good taste.'

'Pour le coup,' said Margot, suddenly interfering, 'what you say there, Monsieur, is not, it seems to me, of the best possible taste.'

But little Valérie's face was dimpling all over with smiles.

'Now you will quarrel, you two,' she said, 'and really there is no reason for it. Monsieur is offended with me because he thinks I have permitted myself a practical joke. You are offended with him because you think no one has any right to sermonise me but yourself. I, on the contrary, am offended with nobody. Look at me—I am pleased! Look at them—they are pleased! I tell you they like their "Ta-ra-ra"! *Allons, allons, ne vous fâchez pas*. Now I will play something for you.'

In another moment the preliminary notes of the first movement of the 'Kreutzer Sonata' floated through the room. There was no need to command silence now; curiosity had been aroused, and though the performance was of a very different order, its wonderful beauty appealed even to the most prosaic and unmusical person present.

As for Croft, he was absolutely dumb: tears stood in his eyes; it seemed to him that those slender fingers of Valérie's were

drawing the heart from out his breast. It was a very dream—never could he have conceived such perfection of tone with a charm so penetrating, so exquisite.

At the close there was real enthusiasm and applause ; people pressed round her with congratulations and admiring speeches.

‘Thou hast surpassed thyself,’ said Margot in an excited tone. Valérie stole one glance at Croft, and smiled a little gratified smile at the emotion still evident in his face.

Handing her violin with a queenly air to her sister, to be restored to its case, she walked up to Lady Mary and dropped a little curtsey.

‘I have played three times,’ she said. ‘It is enough, I think. I am very tired—I will go to bed.’

Whereupon, after shaking hands with her hostess, she made straight for the door, followed by Margot. They saluted the company, right and left, as they passed, with the oddest little stately bows, as if making a royal progress.

(To be continued.)

The Tale of the Flint.

WHEN we were young—in the forties, it may be, or in the fifties—the world went on very well in the belief that the history of human error began precisely in the year 4004 before our era. True, even at that date foreboding tremors might have been heard. In 1849 Edward Forbes, the predecessor of Huxley, was writing: 'I am quite as ready to admit that man's advent happened 20,000 years ago as 5,000.' He goes on to say that to lecture on this subject is to 'try how near one can go to the fire without burning one's fingers.' If these words are compared with the address delivered on the same subject, and to a similar effect, by the President of the British Association at Toronto last autumn, a double change must be confessed. The speaker was at his ease; the audience was delighted. Already also in the forties men learned in the wisdom of Egypt were asking how it was possible that the negro type—the woolly hair, swollen lip, protruding jaw—should in the early monuments of Egypt be so identical with the negro features of to-day, unless popular chronology must be ante-dated. These were scholars. Forbes was a geologist and a poet. General opinion would not have changed as it has had not the burden of proof turned to something more tangible than a geologist's theory, something nearer to our doors than an Egyptian monument.

'Facts are chiefls that winna ding,' and the facts which have brought about this change are among the most undingable, for they are flint stones. Herein Nature has been very kind to us; the impressions of tiny and soft organisms in flint show that at its formation the stone was soft and pliable like jelly. Nature's alembic quickly sealed the yielding lump into silex, a most imperishable substance. Hence at once the use of flint by primitive men as a tool or maker of tools, and also the abundance of weapons of silex all over the world. Unless it be crushed to pieces, the tool once made resists the forces of decay.

The existence of weapons and tools of flint was of course well known in 1840. Johnson had seen and treated with respect some ancient arrow-heads which he saw at Raasay in 1773; polished celts formed part of Norna's 'properties' at the Fitful Head; and for ages the Celtic Highlander, the *Urbewohner* of the poetic Baedeker, had treasured as an amulet to preserve himself from harm the *Skiat-hee*, or fairy's shaft, which he picked up as some ancient moss was drained or trenched. With the publication of Sir Richard Colt Hoare's folios cultivated opinion possessed a broader though less romantic statement of the facts, and recognised that on our moors and downs the tombs are still standing of a race or races of men who fashioned their weapons of war and implements of peace out of flint and other durable stones. History tells nothing of them, yet the time when they lived cannot be far beyond the written record. Their burial rites indicate this, for their bones are frequently found entire, lying, or rather sitting, in the attitude of sleep round the ashes of a fire; beside them are laid the food and the weapons wherewith they were to be supported and to fight in the world to which they had gone. These rites have many counterparts in Roman burial, and were almost repeated in the burials of North American tribes, neither of which nations is far removed by time. So also their weapons of stone, often exquisitely finished, carved, and polished, closely resemble in shape weapons which are now in use or were at no remote date. Their stone axe is our iron axe, their hammer our hammer, their arrow-heads of stone feature the arrow-heads of iron which in the seventeenth century roused the laughter of Dugald Dalgetty. Though history has passed them over, they were not very far distant from ourselves. These views became generally current after the Swiss discoveries of 1851-52, and, much as they require and have received enlargement and illustration, are in no need of correction; they contain an important truth. The later stone age, the era of celt and arrow-head, belongs to modern times, and is separated from the ancient eras of human life. Stretch a hand past history, and you touch the late stone age immediately beyond; but behind the later age of stone lies a still unfathomed gulf of time, which divides ourselves and the neolithic age from the earlier epoch of our race.

Meantime the earthquake was gathering force, for it was decreed that Delos should be stirred. In the year 1832 M. Boucher de Perthes received from a quarryman at Abbeville his first flint implement. One likes to linger on the picture. A peasant gravel-digger presents to de Perthes the first proof of the

great antiquity of the human race. To the one it is a curious stone, value *deux sous* (de Perthes' constant price); but the other knows what it is: it is to him certain proof of the age of the human race, and the realising of a wondrous dream. With what mingled feelings of delight and astonishment and pride did he not take the treasure home; with how firm a resolution to sound the hidden depths of the secret which he alone had divined! De Perthes made no discovery by accident; he had long believed in theory in the great age of man, and his own words are that 'during many years' he sought in vain for proofs. The evidence obtained in 1832 was not generally accepted in England until 1860. 'What weary years of preaching in the wilderness!' a reader may exclaim; but I would answer, 'Quite the reverse; happy years of knowledge increasing, of facts gathering in four-square array, of friends persuaded and opponents silenced.' Finally, between 1858 and 1860 the collections made at Abbeville and Amiens convinced all the savants of France and England whose previous studies qualified them to form a judgment that the proof was absolute of a hitherto unimagined age of mankind; and only a few years had elapsed when fresh evidence came pouring in from all Western Europe supporting and confirming the views long held by de Perthes alone.

Our argument asks what precisely it was which he had found. He had obtained flint tools, undoubtedly worked by the hand of man, in the gravel-beds of the river Somme; that is, in gravel-beds which lie in the present Somme Valley, but above the present level of the stream. They were deposited in the places where they now lie at a time when the river flowed fifty or one hundred feet higher than it now does. The time which a river takes to eat away one hundred feet of its valley is the time which separates us from these early inhabitants of the land. That this time denotes a very lengthened period is visible at once from two pieces of evidence. The late stone period is beyond history, yet all its relics lie on the surface of the present land; the bones of men of the time are often found complete; the wild animals which they hunted were the same as those which in historic times roamed in Europe. With the earlier age all is in contrast; the surface of the land is not the same; implements are found many feet beneath the earth; bones of men have passed away, but huge bones are found of the elephant, the rhinoceros, the hippopotamus, the hyæna, and other animals either altogether extinct, or now far removed from modern France.

England was not behindhand in making similar discoveries. With Mr. (now Sir John) Evans leading the van of pioneers, and carefully registering every find, in a few years the river-valleys of England, from the Great Ouse to the Axe, had revealed their long-hidden treasure, proving the presence of man in our land in times long, long antecedent not merely to history, but to the existing configuration of the surface of the soil, and the present distribution of land and sea. We now saw man the contemporary and the survivor of animals which exist no more. Here in England he hunted the hairy elephant and the Irish elk, he shrank from the hyæna and was gored by the fierce rhinoceros. He passed over the site of London, then beneath the earth; he looked out from Portsmouth Downs, but saw no silvery Solent and no Isle of Wight; he went to Dover, and passed to Calais without oar or sail, for the strait was dry land. England of the past rose before our minds as a peninsula, jutting into the Northern Sea, with the southern part of it, at least, inhabited by human beings whose chief implements were uncouth tools of stone.

This was the great change, and it gave us a new idea of what our race was and what it had done. We saw man in his beginnings, a wild beast of the forest, but already by his intelligence conquering the more powerful brutes, and aiding his own weakness by mechanical adaptation from the stores of natural wealth. We knew what he had become, and felt, surer than seers could tell, that it was by the same intelligence working through heart and mind that in long time he had become altered in body and in mind, in habits and in power. We saw the vision of Jacob; man had wrestled with his Creator, and had prevailed; he had seen the steps that rise from earth to heaven, and held converse with the spirits that were passing up and down. An idea as simple as it is noble, yet, so hard is it to conceive prolonged time, that people in general could hardly have had the heart to grasp it, had it not been that other lines of reasoning were leading them in the same direction.

The two forms of implement discovery of which was fraught with such consequences were as peculiar and as novel as was the fact of their existence. One was a large tool, not infrequently nine inches long; it was sharply pointed at one end and very thick at the other. The second tool was of an oval shape, usually sharpened to an edge all round, and rarely more than six inches in length. Both of them were as a rule worked all over, leaving none of the original surface. The first of the two, the pointed tool, was what

all men love who have a case to prove—it was self-persuasive. Its artificial character was visible and undeniable, and one important purpose for which it was made was equally manifest. The heavy, rounded butt was to be held in the hand, while the sharp point inflicted a deadly blow on the body or skull of a human enemy or captured beast. It was precisely the weapon which sylvan man would require when he lived a wanderer of the forest, without either domesticated animal or cultivated field. The oval implement had by no means such a tell-tale appearance ; its working was equally beyond dispute ; but it had no very distinct analogue from later weapons of stone, and its use could only be conjectured. It was probably employed as a knife for cutting skins and as a scraping tool for cleaning them, besides for many incidental uses. The two tools, pointed and oval, were found of all sizes, as if they had been used by all kinds of persons, men, women, and children, for all kinds of purposes. As Sir John Lubbock said well, we could little tell what they were not used for. They seemed to give us a glimpse of the boyhood of man, when he had but one shaping tool—his pocket-knife ; and who shall tell the uses of a boy's pocket-knife ?

Though varieties in shape were few and apparently accidental—for it is the modern workshop that is full of many tools—the workmanship displayed in the finer examples was neither imperfect nor unskilful ; it was marked by finish and by symmetry in the forms produced. Such examples were much sought after (no longer *à deux sous* ; hence, alas ! a crop of forgers and deluded persons), and naturally, as they were intrinsically works of art, and were also conclusive evidence of work with a purpose, which only human beings can produce, and this evidence was at the time essential. But there was also another class, formed from stones which in their natural state closely resembled the shape required for use ; these, by a few touches of the hammer-stone, had been altered into the tools required. They did not escape the eye, and their importance to the story of man did not escape the thoughts of the late Sir Joseph Prestwich, who collected and carefully preserved a number of flints which showed the least signs of workmanship, as well as those which showed the most.

The relative age of river-valley man in England was also to a certain extent discovered. Three separate finds agreed in referring the implementiferous epoch to a period subsequent to the extension of Arctic cold over England. One of them may be shortly stated. Sir John Evans obtained in Suffolk an implement formed out of a boulder which the ice drift had brought into Suffolk from

the north ; clear proof that that implement was made and used after the period when the cold grasp of ice carried stones from the northern to the southern counties of England.

How pleasantly, in his late address at Toronto, does Sir John Evans recall the time, the movement, the enthusiasm and advance in knowledge ; for 'all men,' we know from Aristotle, 'delight in obtaining knowledge, only,' he adds, with a smile, 'they do not push it to an extreme.' For our purpose let us define the augment to science so far as it concerned the flint. It is this : at a period subsequent to the great descent of Arctic conditions man was a tenant of the present river valleys of southern England. He had few tools of stone, but they were shaped by himself ; he took up from the ground, or even quarried from the chalk (for he did both), a rude block of flint, and then formed it, according to his own pre-conceived purpose, into a shape quite different from the shape of the natural block. He had had long experience, otherwise the difficult material would not have been worked with such consummate skill. He was not the rudest auto-savage, otherwise symmetry would not have been so conspicuous in his handiwork, which had no sign of prentice efforts.

It is the stage of the perfect tool. Can the flint from the earth carry us no further ? Mr. Benjamin Harrison, the village grocer of Ightham, in Kent, thought that it might. He had for a number of years discovered many of these perfect implements of the river-valley or palæolithic type in the gravels or on the surface near Ightham, when he was struck by the following theory : Evolution is a great fact ; it is the law under which modern inventions and improvements advance ; it applies to man's physical frame and to his mental powers ; much more must it be applicable to his early inventions. The river-valley implement is not a simple thing ; the art which it shows was no invention of a day ; it must have had predecessors and antecedents. The predecessor of a shaped stone would be an unshaped stone, used as an implement just in the state in which it was picked up from the ground. Such a tool could not be recognised by the usual tests, which involve shaping and flaking all over ; but it might possibly be recognised by the marks at the edge, where it had been used for scraping or cutting, and might have a few chips besides added to give it an edge. The general shape of the stone, however, would be as Nature made it, not as man made it ; he would only have left his mark upon the edges.

As to this theory, it must be observed that all who believe in evolution, who are a great majority, must accept it. The Bushman

of to-day still uses in the construction of his arrows a simple stone picked up from the ground. Unless it was taken from his hand it could not be recognised as a tool, for the soft wood leaves no mark on the stone. This is the first stage, which cannot manifestly be traced in ancient deposits. The second, or Harrisonian stage, if we may be allowed the word, we may see among us. A country housemaid, who picks up a piece of soft sandstone to scour her doorstep, is working at this stage. She, however, by polishing the stone, at once takes an unauthorised leap into the latest or neolithic period. A better example may be taken from our grandfathers, who used in their tinder-boxes a piece of flint picked from the field; its edge was soon broken and chipped by blows of the steel. The flint was then essentially of the Harrisonian type. There can, therefore, to believers in evolution, be no doubt that an epoch of this kind did exist, and was also extended for no inconsiderable period. It might, of course, have existed and been rapidly thrown over; but this is extremely improbable. This view of the case does not, of course, necessitate the acceptance of Mr. Harrison's discoveries, as he may be wrong in thinking that he has found traces of such an epoch; but it ought to obtain for them a patient hearing, if not a favourable regard.

With this theory Mr. Harrison went perseveringly to work 'during many years,' like M. de Perthes. His favourite hunting-ground was the plateau formed by the North Downs in Kent, near the village of Ash, where the surface deposits are undoubtedly of great age. The land stands at an elevation of from 700 to 500 feet above sea-level, and is not the work of existing rivers, or in connection with them. The sides of the plateau are torn away by modern watercourses, and carried off to form the débris of the river-valley period; on their flanks, as they approach the Thames, old gravel-beds are found with the river-valley implements. The plateau is older than this denudation, and is covered with deeply imbrownèd spreads of gravel. From these ancient drifts Mr. Harrison formed his collection, and ere long he found that he was not obtaining isolated examples, but types which were frequently reproduced. The fact that many examples occurred showing the same type first, I believe, convinced him that the series which he was collecting was not the work of Nature, and could only be attributed to a human hand and a human design.

The late Sir Joseph (then Professor) Prestwich was a neighbour of Mr. Harrison's. We have seen that in 1860 he collected at

Amiens the flints which showed least signs of work. Mr. Harrison showed him the stones which he was gathering, and after some time, by no means hastily, he, or rather the collection which he had arranged, persuaded the Professor of the truth of his theory.

In 1890 Sir Joseph laid before his old friends of the Geological Society the views which were suggested by Mr. Harrison's collection and by the site from which it was obtained. He urged that the flints were implements used and slightly chipped by man, and that they represented an earlier stage of human life than had hitherto been found in England, both in time and in culture. Their great age was proved by their position on the crest of the chalk hills ; they had been carried down from the south at a time when the chalk extended far further southwards than it now does ; chalk hundreds of feet in thickness, and perhaps miles in length, had been carried away since their deposition. Beds containing palæolithic implements lie on the present surface, which was once covered by these hundreds of feet of wasted chalk. The plateau drifts, therefore, which were laid down above this chalk, before it was wasted away, are of an almost inconceivably greater age than those which were only laid down after the mountain of chalk had been eroded. The stupendous erosion of the chalk was attributed by Sir Joseph to the influence of the ice age ; the flints, therefore, which had been carried down before the hills were worn away were antecedent to the Arctic period of England. The implements themselves he divided into classes, and explained how he thought they had been used.

The speaker did not carry all his audience with him, and although Mr. Harrison has convinced many persons, young and old, who are conversant with the subject, since 1890, his position is not universally accepted. It was at first objected that the age of his specimens was quite uncertain, since a majority had been obtained from the surface. This question was set to rest once for all by digging two pits near the crest of the chalk ; the home of the flints in question was found eight feet from the surface. This eight feet of soil had been washed away by rains at the point where they appeared on the surface. It was also said that mere marks of use on the edge could never identify a stone as genuine without the usual hall-marks of flaking. Nature might make the same slight chipping or touchings on the edge. Further, it was said that the implements were so blunt that they could not be used for any purpose. Natural influences do chip the edges of flints. Silex Bay, under Flam-

borough Head, where tabular flints have been dislodged from the chalk and rolled for ages in the enclosure of the bay, is a workshop of Nature where a lesson may be learnt. Flints there are found chipped or broken all round the edge, but very irregularly—there is no look of purpose about the result; four consecutive strokes are never the same. Again, Nature always knocks off prominent ends and smooths them; Nature does not work out a curve in the side of a flint and leave the ends which contain it untouched. These are features in many of Mr. Harrison's types, and considerations of this kind have long convinced the writer that Mr. Harrison's type-forms were not produced by Nature, but by man.

The objection that they could be used for nothing seems very fatal, but is in reality a good cause to consider them authentic. This is no case where an antiquary should expect one of those beautiful finds which he obtains perhaps too often. We are on the traces of the Bushman, not the civilised man of past ages, and it is but fair to expect that his tools will more or less represent himself and be blunt and dull; they will certainly be without the attractions of art. The place claimed for them in human progress asks that this should be their character. It is true that the absence of sharp flakes is astonishing; but it is an exaggeration to say that the flints are altogether unlike those which were used in later times; some of them closely resemble in shape the pointed and oval types of later date, while the others were not unfitted for scraping, cutting, piercing a hole, or giving a round shape to a club, and do find close analogues in exceptional but undoubted tools of later times. Poor tools, perhaps; but they were poor men, who lived ages before the knock-kneed, low-browed, chinless race of Neanderthal and Spy. To expect perfect implements from such men is surely to repeat the myth of the early perfection of mankind.

At this point the writer must call 'Peccavi,' and confess that for the sake of clearness he has given to these ancient relics a simplicity of exposition which they cannot claim. Were they found absolutely alone in these old gravels a solution of their story would have been easy. Here, we should have said, in these primæval river-courses lie vestiges of the oldest of races, distinct from the paleolithic tribes, who lived for ages after them in our land. These were a weaker race and more feebly armed; the river-valley tribes, stronger men with stronger weapons, effaced from the earth this stock of humble aborigines. Unfortunately the antiquary has not always an easy time, and in this case the

record is not self-interpreting. The humbler implements do not occur alone, for in the same gravels are found, though rarely, some deeply coloured implements, or much worn and rolled fragments of shaped implements of the later river-valley type. Therefore, as far as the record tells us, both types of tool were in use at the same time, although the humbler predominated.

These worn and battered fragments, as they are among the most ancient, are also among the most striking relics of man's handiwork ever found on our island. Let the reader picture to himself. On the summit of the chalk hills, on a flat plateau, are found broken implements so worn by natural agencies that their working can hardly be recognised; they are almost reduced to rounded pebbles, and find an analogue only in those sea-beaten implements which have fallen from Barton Cliff, in Hampshire, and have tossed for years in the ebb and flow of the tide. These fragments tell us of a similar action taking place on the level and silent down, and though their presence disturbs a simple theory, it also, as their authenticity is unimpeachable, removes every doubt of the existence of man in England during the remote period which we have claimed for him.

The archeologist has in this difficulty three alternatives: either the humbler implements are not authentic, the solution of Sir John Evans; or the beds have become mixed—so that tools of different ages are found side by side; or the humbler and the nobler types were used simultaneously. For reasons already given the writer cannot adopt the first alternative; the second would have been most plausible, had the finds been made only on the surface. Undoubtedly, on the surface so much earth has been carried away by rain that solider portions of very different ages are found together. But in the pit excavations, 18 feet deep, some of these rolled, shaped stones have been found. It is difficult to think that a theory of mixture of beds can apply to remains found so deep in the earth.

The writer therefore adopts the third alternative, to which he is also led by his solution of a second difficulty. He does not believe that all the humbler implements of Mr. Harrison's collection are of quite the same age. He agrees in this point with Mr. Worthington Smith, who, in his excellent work, *Man, the Primeval Savage*, gives his opinion that some of Mr. Harrison's implements are of a later age than others. The writer further believes that as our river-valley deposits are more thoroughly examined, and by skilled observers, it will be found

that implements of the Harrisonian type are present in small numbers, and gradually die away. The solution, therefore, which he would offer is this. The gravel-beds of the North Downs, explored by Mr. Harrison and interpreted by Sir Joseph Prestwich, contain the earliest relics of human life as yet won from our soil. Man used two types of tool, one advanced, the other rude. Just as the advanced tool points us to the future, when it became practically the only tool used by man, so the rude tool points us back to a still remoter past, when it was the only tool or weapon used by man. Go back as far as we can, we are pointed to a still further beyond 'in the dark backward and abysm of time.' If these views are true, that in the earliest period when flint appears as the aid of man it appears as a survival from an earlier and less-developed time, a strange similarity is to be found in one of its last appearances. Professor Flinders Petrie, in one of his many discoveries, has given us a glimpse of the time when the long reign of flint came to a close in Egypt. It was in the Twelfth Dynasty; men were acquainted with copper and bronze; they shaped pottery on the wheel in beautiful forms and painted it in beautiful colours; they carved ivory in forms of deeply suggestive meaning—yet still the flint knife, exquisitely worked, was used in the service of religion, and was laid in time-honoured custom in the tomb beside the dead; still the flint saw was used in the household, the flint reaping-hook in the field, and the flint toy in the nursery. So the use of flint, a long and tried institution, died hard; men clung out of affection to the old servant who was past his work.

To take a last review from the pleasant hills of Kent, where the north-east wind blows free about the temples, what is our position? We find man living in our country at a very remote age, when the North Downs stood higher and extended far to the south. So far all are agreed—a word of happy omen. Many of us—an increasing number, I think—accept the lower or Harrisonian type of implement, and believe that the stage of human life, of which we have relics beneath our feet, was, so far as it is reflected in the majority of its remains, not merely a lowly stage, but the most lowly which we are able to retrace by aid of implements of flint. Should the reader ask if these discoveries lead us back to the beginnings of human life, the reply must be, 'Certainly not.' No one, to the writer's knowledge, has ever dreamt of asking that the hills of Kent should be considered the cradle of mankind. Men probably traversed the earth far and

wide before they had stone weapons or tools at all, and certainly man had come a long pilgrimage before he settled on the Kentish Downs. His beginnings are not to be sought in his implements, but in remains of his own framework, and in lands that harmonise more with his racial affinities. To claim that the earliest form of tool as yet discovered on English soil appears in certain very ancient drifts of the Kentish Downs is a different thing from asking that the Kentish Downs should be considered the cradle of the human race. We do contend that Mr. Harrison's labours have brought into our view a hitherto unrecognised stage of human progress, or at least a portion of that stage. Reason persuades us that such a period did exist, and in all probability was prolonged, and also that it is the earliest stage to which we can follow our ancestors by aid of their handiwork. It is not surprising that the relics in question escaped observation for twenty years, or that their authenticity has been disputed. The point is a difficult one to prove in fact, even though allowed in theory; and the evidence would not have been, as it is, convincing, had it not been for the patience and perseverance with which it has been collected by the labour of many years.

A. M. BELL.

The Flight of a Soul.

LOST, lost, and not a ray
 To turn my night to day,
 Lost, and no music's air
 To break my dread despair :

Lost in the whelming dark,
 With not a transient spark
 From the immortal fire
 Of purified desire :

Lost, where the meteor storm
 Sweeps past in formless form,
 And, infinitely sped,
 The rushing worlds seem dead.

Lost, where each ordered sun
 Reports his duty done ;
 Lost, in the unnamed abyss
 Where sun and satellite kiss.

Found, when the secret's found,
 When every meanest mound
 Respeaks the Word that cries
 To Lazarus, Arise !

Found, when that wondrous note
 Rings from each dancing mote ;
 Found, when the soul grows still
 Before the Eternal Will.

Found, where the Deed and Word
Through measureless vasts are heard,
Where firmaments unknown
Swell one great organ tone,

Where never space nor time
Ruled that tremendous Rhyme,
Where sphere on sphere is riven
In the harmonies of Heaven.

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK.

The Last Crossing.

‘FERRY, ahoy! Ferry!’

F The east wind brought the words crisp and clear over the river, distinct as pistol-shots. Simeon Embley, bent over the garden bed where he was setting out his early-sown cauliflowers, muttered, ‘Train’s in, then,’ and took no further notice.

‘Ferry! Hi! Ferry!’

There was a note of imperious anger in the voice.

‘A stranger,’ muttered Simeon, as he chose out a couple more shoots and made two holes in the ground. When he had planted the cauliflowers to his liking he straightened his back, so far as rheumatism would allow him, and looked out across the river.

‘Two on ‘em; swells from Gloucester,’ he added, noticing a pair of tall hats and black coats that looked absurd in their rural surroundings. ‘Where be that boy? Jim! Jim!’

After calling three or four times he remembered that he had sent Jim to Chipping Olds for garden seeds.

‘Well, then, ye may bide a while longer yet. I’ll go down to t’other end of the row afore I budge for ‘ee. That’s it! Shout a bit louder, can’t ‘ee? I bean’t a-goin’ to waste a fine March mornin’ for no swells, not me! Ho, ho! ‘ark to ‘un!’

By the time he had finished his row the shouting had ceased, and the ‘swells’ were sitting, chilly and enraged, on the driest stone they could find. The tide had gone out, leaving a rich layer of mud, into which they were forced to put their town-made boots, and the March wind whistled keenly round their huddled shoulders and knees. Simeon chuckled as he watched them, and the more he chuckled the slower he worked at the rickety handle that wound the clumsy ferry across the chain.

‘Confound you! Hurry up, can’t you?’ shouted one of the strangers as Simeon neared the bank. ‘Can’t you see we’re frozen to death in this beastly wind?’

‘Tis a fine mornin’ for settin’ out cauliflowers,’ answered

Simeon, as he dropped the handle and threw down a plank for the men to walk over. 'A fine mornin' for the ferry, and grand for settin' out cauliflowers.'

The elder man, who had done all the shouting, was tall and stout, with pink cheeks and red whiskers.

'Blow your cauliflowers!' he said. 'Are you kept here to work the ferry or to mess about in a garden? Here am I with an important business engagement, as much as I can possibly get through before the last train goes, and you keep me waiting in the mud for half an hour!'

Simeon picked up the plank and turned leisurely to the handle.

'Is this the only way of crossing the river?' the stranger went on.

Simeon stopped working and looked up.

'Be a bridge at Riddle, ten mile up,' he said with a grin. 'Ye can walk thither, if 'ee do like.'

'Go on, for Heaven's sake, and get us across before midnight! I'm in a hurry. Just imagine, Saunderson,' he went on, addressing the pale youth with high cheek-bones who accompanied him, 'this—this!—is the only way across the river from Brentwood, seven miles away on the coast, to Riddle, ten miles further upstream. I wonder they didn't send for me ten years ago!'

'Rickety old tub this ferry, certainly, Mr. Braxon.'

'Rickety, Saunderson! rickety! I should think rotten a more appropriate word. That chain is so worn as to be positively dangerous. Certainly they should have sent for me long ago. And the mud in which we are standing at this moment! Faugh!'

He looked down, in angry pathos, at his natty patent-leather boots, now smeared all over the pointed toe-caps with sticky mud.

'Never mind, Mr. Braxon,' said the pale youth. 'The old hulk will last its day, no doubt. They have sent for you at last, and in two years' time——'

'Sh!' said Mr. Braxon, holding up a fat finger; and Saunderson stood abashed.

Simeon said nothing, but he listened keenly. If there was one thing he loved more than his garden, it was his ferry; and for the thirty years he had been ferryman not a word had reached his ears that could shake his affection. Had he worked it oftener himself there is no knowing what even the patient inhabitants of

the district might have said ; but the agile Jim, who had gone that morning to Chipping Olds for garden seeds, was in the habit of making the wheel go faster than Simeon thought quite consistent with the proper dignity of the Witford Ferry.

The conversation, then, of Mr. Braxon and his companion was all the more disturbing for being, in a sense, irreligious. The Witford Ferry was a part of Nature, of the Order of Things ; and disrespectful language about it seemed like blasphemy.

The strangers disembarked, and Mr. Braxon contemptuously tossed a shilling into the mud. Simeon looked at the gift, then at the donor, drew his sleeve across his mouth, and moved slowly towards his cottage, never noticing that the two men turned not up the high-road past the stone-quarries, but sharp to the right along the river bank.

Till dinner-time he worked in his garden. The cauliflowers were all set out and he was preparing to go indoors, when the voice of Jim hailed him in excitement from the garden gate.

‘Mr. Embley !’

‘Well, ‘ast got them Schoolmasters, Jim ?’

‘Aye, but, Mr. Embley——’

‘And the peas ?’

‘Aye, sir, but——’

‘What did Pitcher say ‘bout them runners ?’

‘Did you bring them two swells over, Mr. Embley ?’

Simeon shot a glance of suspicion at the lad’s excited face.

‘Well, what on ‘em ?’

‘Do ‘ee know what they be come ‘bout ?’

‘Not I.’

‘Tis the new bridge, then, Mr. Embley.’

Jim had delivered his news, and paused to watch the effect of his words. Anyone in the village, he thought, must be roused on hearing such things, especially Mr. Embley, whose material interests were sure to be affected by the innovation. But he was disappointed.

‘Indeed, Jim,’ said the old man, getting slowly into his coat. ‘And what bridge may that be, then ?’

‘Why, the new bridge what’s to go over the river ‘ere, ‘stead o’ the ferry ! You wasn’t ‘ere, Mr. Embley, that day—last summer ‘twas—when them three chaps come down and ‘ired out the small boat and went up stream a bit takin’ soundin’s, as they called it. Well, this mornin’, as I come across the fields from Olds and reaches the bank I sees them two swells pokin’ ‘bout with a

measure and a map and such-like. They didn't see me, but I 'eerd 'em talkin', and so sure as my name be Jim Fry, that's what they be 'bout.'

Simeon stood silent for a moment. Then he said :

' Jim, be a shillin' in the bottom o' the ferry. Thou can 'ave 'un if thou do like. Come in and 'ave thy dinner first. I do want 'ee to go back to Olds this arternoon 'bout a rake as I forgot to mention. And if thou do want, thou may 'ave the rest o' the day.'

Now Simeon knew perfectly well that Jim had a sweetheart in Chipping Olds, and that, once off on his errand with a shilling in his pocket, he would be seen no more in Witford that day. And when the silent meal was over, and Jim was half-a-mile away across the fields, he went down to the ferry.

At that time of year the last train left Witford at four o'clock, and the 'swells' were bound to catch that or none. Anyone else who might come would have to put up with waiting till Simeon pleased to take them over. They were used to it.

He slipped the handle from the wheel, reached over the side to the small boat that was attached to the ferry, and took out the sculls. Then, having thus made it impossible for anyone to cross the river, he returned home, put the sculls and the handle in the corner of the room, and locked the door.

A quarter of an hour before the train was due he heard Mr. Braxon's imperious cry :

'Ferry !'

Simeon crept to the window and looked out.

'Ferry !' cried Mr. Braxon again. The architect was standing within a few yards of the ferryman, but he knew it not.

'Confound it !' said Mr. Braxon. 'The old idiot may have gone out, or anything, and it only wants fifteen minutes to the train.'

'The last train ?' sighed Saunderson.

'Yes. And if we should miss it we shall have to walk—to walk, Saunderson!—over a particularly hilly road seven miles to Brentwood; for I doubt if there is a trap to be had in this benighted place.'

'To walk !' echoed Mr. Saunderson. 'Oh, Lord !'

A man approached driving a flock of sheep.

'Hi !' called Mr. Braxon. 'Where's the ferryman ?'

'Dunno,' said the man without looking at him.

'Well, where does he live, then ?'

'There,' replied the man, jerking his thumb over his shoulder.

Mr. Braxton stepped to the door of the cottage and knocked loudly with his umbrella. Simeon crossed the room slowly and opened the door.

‘Well?’ said he.

‘Take us across the river at once!’ cried Mr. Braxton. ‘We want to catch a train.’

‘Ah! do ‘ee now?’

‘Come, come! be quick!’

‘Excuse me, mister, but be you the gents as be come ‘bout a bridge over the river ‘ere?’

‘What’s that to you? Come and take us over at once. We shall miss the train!’

‘What be *that* to I? Will ‘ee answer my question?’

‘Not until I am on the ferry.’

‘Ah! that be a pity, then,’ said Simeon slowly. ‘Tis like this. If I’d a-known your answer, maybe I’d take ‘ee, maybe not. But till I do know ‘un, ye don’t cross in my ferry; and that’s flat!’

The smoke of the train was seen coming up the valley. Mr. Braxton rushed to the river bank. But the sculls and the handle were safe in the cottage, and his helplessness drove him back to the door in fury.

‘We are—we are those gentlemen!’ he cried.

‘Then ye may walk,’ said Simeon, and deliberately closed the door in his face.

The train whistled and left the station. Mr. Braxton watched it go. Then he turned with purple cheeks and lifted fist to the cottage door.

‘Your days are numbered!’ he shouted. ‘Your time has come! You will bitterly regret this hour! You——’

But his stock of phrases was exhausted; and, for fear of dropping into language unworthy of a F.R.I.B.A., he turned abruptly and was gone.

Simeon crept forth smiling. The immediate joy of having bested the overbearing ‘swell’ cloaked his perturbation, and the smile lived while he planted a row of potatoes. It faded during the second row, was gone in the third; and when at dusk he pulled on his coat he seemed to be ten years older, more feeble and crippled than before.

A battle was raging within him between adoration of his ferry and a despairing conviction that the bad news, which Jim had brought and the stranger confirmed, was going to turn out true. Simeon Embley’s Witford Ferry was known and

beloved, he told himself, all over Gloucestershire. Crossing backwards and forwards for thirty years, he had come to worship it, until it seemed as if the river existed solely for the purpose of bearing the ferry, the passengers solely for the purpose of being borne by it. Memories of still summer nights, when his friends and neighbours coming home from market had made the valley ring with laughter and jest; of floods and storms in winter, when he and Jim could barely cross in safety, and the women-folk on board hid from their eyes the sight of the awful swirling water that threatened to snap the chain and carry them away down stream; of the days when he would dawdle over the wheel to snatch a moment's more pleasure from the eyes and lips of some bright girl; memories even of restive bullocks or frightened sheep that had enlivened the crossing fluttered in his head: and as a background to all he saw the numberless fair aspects of the cliffs and woods that filled the graceful cup of the valley, and heard the rattle of the chain and the creaking of the wheel. All the love and poetry of his lonely life were centred there, and he believed that others must share his worship. Simeon Embley's Witford Ferry to be no more! and a bridge, a common thing of stone and iron, which a man might cross without speaking to a soul, to take its place! The neighbours would never permit it.

'Mr. Embley!' called a shrill voice, and he started from his chair to hurry down with the sculls. That was Mrs. Grimes, and if anyone besides himself and Jim had heard of the bridge, Mrs. Grimes would be sure to know all about it, and more. When he said good-night to her on the opposite shore his hopes shot up again like scarlet runners. The garrulous body had talked of the weather, the parson, her husband's lumbago, of anything and everything except the new bridge. And that night Simeon Embley slept in peace.

Next morning he was up betimes. He and Jim were hard at work from dawn till ten o'clock, ferrying over load after load of men and cattle and sheep, new harness and garden tools, and the thousand and one things that were to be bought and sold at the monthly fair at Tytherington, five miles east of Witford. Simeon's ears were open. At a chance mention of 'The Ridge' he looked up in alarm, only to double quickly over the wheel on realising that the farmer was speaking merely of his own village. At dinner-time he was radiant, drank two glasses of beer, and spoke three separate times to Jim. The good old days had not passed yet. It was Tytherington Fair day, and where would Tytherington Fair be without the Witford Ferry?

Towards evening the stream began again, the same farmers returning with different flocks and herds. The first to cross was a stranger, the second too busy with a restive ram to do more than nod at the ferryman; but the third was an old friend, with nothing but a pocketful of money to think of, and he plunged straight into conversation.

‘A fine arternoon, Simeon.’

‘Thou be right, William. A fine arternoon for the ferry.’

‘Well, Simeon, ’ast ’eard the news?’

The corners of the ferryman’s mouth tightened as he answered:

‘No.’

‘What! ’ast thou not ’eard the news? Why, ’tis all folks can speak of in Tytherin’ton.’

Simeon needed no telling that the news was bad news, the worst possible. But all the more anxious was he to hear it definitely stated.

‘Why dost thou not tell ’un, then?’

‘To think of ’ee not knowin’ ’un, Simeon! My! ’tis grand news, and no mistake. Mr. Eddin’ton o’ the Bull in Tytherin’ton, ’e do know ’un for certain, ’e do. ’E ’ad ’un of ’Argreaves ’issel.’

Simeon turned his back to the speaker, on the pretence of working with the other arm. Silence, he knew, was the only way to compel his passenger to speak out.

William lit his pipe slowly, full of the importance of being the first to carry the news to the ferryman. When the third sulphur match was spent, and the tip of his little finger pleasantly warmed by pressing in the burning tobacco, he took up his tale.

‘Ferry’s seen ’er best days, Simeon, eh? Do begin to look main shabby now, don’t ’er?’

Simeon’s back gave no response, and the oppressive silence forced William to speak on.

‘Well, thou do know as the river bed’s been siltin’ up this many a year, and ’Argreave’s stone-barges is al’ays gettin’ grounded between this and Brentwood. Be a couple on ’em stuck there ’bout five mile down now, so I do ’ear. Well, ’e’ve a-been worritin’ at ’em this three year to build ’un a bridge over the river ’ere. ’Twould be cheaper, so they do say, for ’un to send ’is stone from the quarries across to the station, and then on by the train, do’ee see? Well, they do say as ’e ’ve a-got the Council, or the ’Ighway Board, or Sewers, or whatever it may be, anyways one o’ them parcels o’ gents as do sit in Gloucester and tell us what we be to do and what we bean’t to do with our own, spendin’ our money on this that and t’other without so much as

by your leave. 'Tis the lawyers as be at the bottom of it all, Simeon, you mark my words! Well, where was I? Oh, ah! 'Argreaves 'ave a-got 'em to do us one good turn now, and the bridge is to be built at once.'

Simeon brought the ferry to and threw down the plank for his passenger to cross. But the bearer of tidings was in no hurry to be gone.

'Twill be a great improvement, eh, Simeon? Better nor this blamed old tub, as 'alf the neighb'rhood would see at the bottom o' the river and be glad of it! 'Twill be a grand thing, that bridge, so they do say; stone and iron and steel, and what not, and main fine to look at. 'Twill be this way, thou seest, Simeon. One side o' the bridge 'll be for carts and sheep and such-like, just an or'inary road; then 'll come a big sort o' fence like o' iron, and then t'other side o' that 'll be a set o' rails for 'Argreave's trucks o' stone. They'll 'ave a inclined plane, as they do call 'un, straight down from the quarries there on the 'illside; and a chap 'll sit on the trucks with a brake in 'is 'and and run 'em down a rope or summat straight into the station. Maybe I 'aven't got the 'ang of 'un quite, like; but that be near 'un anyways. Then on the far side o' the bridge, near the station, they be goin' to build a toll'-ouse. A toll'-ouse, Simeon!'

The last words were husky with importance, and the speaker paused. Simeon Embley appeared to be examining the links of the chain. He looked over his shoulder and said:

'Good arternoon, William.'

'Good arternoon do 'ee say, Simeon, and never wait to 'ear the best bit o' news o' the lot? Thou never was talkative, Simeon, but— Ain't 'ee feelin' well, Simeon? Thou do seem a bit queer-like to-day. Rheumatiz bad, or what be it? And don't 'ee want to 'ear who be a-goin' to live in that toll'-ouse, Simeon, and 'ave nought to do but take the tolls off of folks as do come across, instead o' pulling all day at a rusty old wheel and a chain? 'Twill be a grand place, so they say, that toll'-ouse; three rooms, Simeon, and one on 'em a fitted kitchen. Better nor some folks' ouses as I could tell on, eh?'

The last words were shouted aloud, for Simeon Embley was already at the door of his cottage. William went up the road wondering.

To Jim's intense surprise, his master insisted on crossing and recrossing that evening every time that the ferry was called for. Simeon wanted to know the worst. William's disparaging words rang in his ears, and before nightfall he learned that what William

had said all the neighbours thought. Good manners had kept them silent hitherto: the excitement of the news loosed their tongues, and on all sides Simeon heard nothing but cruel words about that which till that day he had regarded as equally dear to himself and the whole countryside.

When the last load had crossed and all was quiet the ferryman crept down to the water's edge. Standing on the ferry he took hold of the chain, and stroked it up and down lovingly.

'I were thinkin' 'bout a new chain for 'ee, come Michaelmas,' he muttered, 'but—'

From that day forward Simeon Embley was never seen to cross the river. Passengers on the ferry would sometimes see him look up from his garden beds to watch Jim as he came or went on the swift water.

'Simeon do be breakin' up fast. Too much for 'un now to work the ferry,' someone would say, after shouting him a half-ironical greeting. And another might answer:

'Breakin' up? Ah! Some might call 'un that; but the nighest word for 'un be *temper*.'

Mr. Braxton and his assistant came frequently to Witford, and the former was delighted with Jim.

'Smart boy, that! A smart boy, I say, Saunderson! Ah! I think I see the old curmudgeon himself digging potatoes. A fitter occupation than ferrying for him, I think.'

But neither Mr. Braxton nor the neighbours guessed that often, as Simeon looked out over the river, his eyes were full of tears, and his heart of longing to be once more at the wheel.

Meanwhile, from Gloucester came stonemasons and iron-workers, engineers and quarrymen; and the sound of axes and hammers struck sharp echoes from the rocks on either side of the river. A long row of mushroom cottages sprang into shameless existence within a stone's-throw of Simeon's garden. The whole place was altered. Spring gave way to summer, summer to winter; but the long months brought no familiarity to deaden the effect of the change. Every day the noise and bustle seemed more terrible. For thirty years Simeon had watched the valley, until his inarticulate joy in its quiet beauty had grown to be part of his life. In this new and topsy-turvy world, where vulgar hands scarred the ancient faces of the rocks, and the bed of the sacred river was polluted by the labour of strangers, he felt lonely and miserable.

Pride drove him further into solitude. He would not stoop to communion with the profane herd prostrate before the new

gods, he, the high priest of the old order. To the casual greeting of the passer-by he would respond, but any attempt to open conversation drove him straight into his cottage. The only person he would listen to was Jim ; and he never tired of asking the boy how many people had crossed the river, whether that loose plank was any looser, how the chain was holding, and so on. For Jim, at least, loved the old ferry. He made his living out of her ; and, therefore, Simeon thought, it was almost as hard for Jim as for himself. Jim would be sorry when the bridge was finished.

The shock, therefore, was all the greater when one day Jim, after much puffing and blowing, blurted out :

‘Mr. Embley, I do want to leave ‘ee.’

‘Leave me, Jim ? Whatever for ?’

‘Please, Mr. Embley, they do want more stonemasons on the bridge, and mother thought as ‘ow ‘twould be a chance for me to better myself, now as the ferry ‘ll soon ‘ave done runnin’.’

‘The bridge !’ he gasped. ‘Thou do want to go on the bridge !’

‘Aye, Mr. Embley, please, sir. And, please, sir, young Jack Hodges, ‘e be the young brother o’ one o’ the men on the bridge, sir, do want to take my place, sir. So if thou could lemme go at the end o’ the week——’

‘The end o’ the week !’ The piping voice quavered in fury. ‘Nay, nay ! Never shall ‘ee set ‘and to ‘un again ! Thou that’s been with me and the ferry these five year, thou do want to go on—the bridge ! Send young Hodges to me this arternoon ; and if ever I do catch ‘ee nigh the ‘andle o’ my ferry again, look ‘ee out for thyself !’

And so there was one more pang in the old man’s heart, one more shock to his eyes when he looked out upon the world from his garden : the spectacle of Jim at work upon the bridge, or playing pitch-and-toss with the other masons in the dinner-hour, while a stranger, unused to the traditions of the Witford Ferry, took his honourable place.

It was within a month of the opening of the bridge that Simeon heard a knock at his door, and opened it to find Mr. Braxton and Mr. Saunderson awaiting him. The great man was a trifle pinker, a trifle plumper than before, and in his eye was the light of triumph.

‘Well, my old friend !’ he cried cheerily. He was on the side of the new, and the bent figure before him on that of the old, and he felt that he could afford to be affable.

‘Well?’ came the answer.

‘I have come to see you this morning on a pleasant errand; very pleasant I may say, Saunderson, eh?’

‘Yes, Mr. Braxon.’

‘Now that my bridge is so soon to be opened to the public, of course I need hardly say that the ferry, Mr. Embley, will be a thing of the past. And a very good thing too! I am sure you will agree with me, Mr. Embley. The whole neighbourhood is of the same opinion. An old man like you should not be exposing himself to all kinds of wind and weather, when he might be snugly at home in a nice new house with three rooms, with nothing to do but take the tolls from the passers-by; eh, Saunderson?’

‘No, Mr. Braxon.’

‘Well, my old friend, I need not tell *you* that I have used all my little influence to get a tried and trusted man appointed to the post of toll-collector on my bridge. And I am happy to say that my endeavours have succeeded. I have been notified this morning that the post is yours.’

He stopped, beaming down upon the recipient of his favours. But there was no gratitude in the eyes with which Simeon Embley scanned his prosperous form, down from the shining hat to the shining boots, and up again till they remained fixed on a gold-stopped tooth disclosed by the smile of benevolence.

‘They do want I to go and live yonder?’ he asked at length.

‘That’s it!’ cried Mr. Braxon. ‘That nice new house is for you.’

‘There be no garden there.’

‘No, but there’s a beautiful kitchen, and a bedroom with a fireplace.’

‘And they do want I to go and live yonder?’

‘Mr. Braxon threw a despairing glance at his assistants as much as to say: ‘How slow of comprehension are these rustics!’

‘I understand, Mr. Embley, that you merely rent your present house and garden, and are dependent on the ferry for your living. You see, of course, how much better it would be to accept the handsome, the very handsome, salary allowed to the gatekeeper, than—than—’

‘Go to the ‘ouse?’ said Simeon.

‘Precisely. You see the alternative. And I feel certain that I have earned your gratitude for what little influence I have been the humble means of exercising on your behalf.’

'Ah! 'twas you, then, what did tell 'em as I'd go and live yonder?'

'It was! it was!'

'Then—then I'll see 'ee 'ung first!'

The door slammed, and the architect and his assistant were left gasping at each other outside.

But Simeon's troubles were not yet over. A few days later he received a letter from Sir Richard Hargreaves' agent, informing him that his tenancy of the cottage must terminate within a month of that date. Owing to the new facilities for traffic opened up by the bridge, operations at the stone-quarries were to be conducted on a much larger scale than before. Simeon's old house was to be pulled down, and the land on which it stood was to be covered by a long row of cottages for the new hands.

From that hour he touched neither spade nor rake.

The news spread over Witford at once, and many were the sly attempts to draw the old man into conversation through his window, that the neighbours might be satisfied on the important question of his plans. But he baffled them all. It was not till the parson's wife was called in to help that any knowledge was gained. She, intrepid and managing woman that she was, forced her way into the sitting-room and asked him point blank what he was going to do.

He sat with eyes fixed on the floor, struggling between natural politeness and resentment at this interference in what he naturally considered to be his own affairs.

'Don't 'ee worry, mum,' he said. 'Ye'll know soon enough. So'll the neighbours when the time do come.'

'Now, don't think I ask merely from inquisitiveness,' she replied; and he knew that his shaft had stuck. 'The Vicar and I naturally wish to help you, Simeon, after crossing so often in that sweet old ferry. For my part, I shall never care for the new bridge, however fine it may be.'

It was the first good word spoken since the evil days began, and the old man's eyes sought hers in intense anxiety. They dropped to the floor at once on reading the emptiness of her compliment. A little tact, a momentary avoidance of his gaze, would have given the woman a priceless opportunity of seeing bared before her the whole passionate story of his thoughts. She lost it, and he froze immediately.

'You will leave Witford?' she asked in desperation.

'Aye, mum.'

‘Are you going far?’

‘Aye, far.’

‘You have friends where you are going?’

‘Aye, mum; most of my friends be there by now.’

‘Then it will be Gloucester you are going to?’

He thought deeply for a moment, and then said, looking out of the window:

‘Aye, it might be Gloucester.’

And the neighbours believed that he meant it.

The opening of the bridge was fixed for the fourteenth of October. The ceremony was to be performed by the man familiarly called ‘Argreaves, but known to the county as Sir Richard Hargreaves, Bart., Deputy-Lieutenant of the County of Gloucester, &c., &c. Mr. Braxton, as architect, was to play a great part in the celebration, and Mr. Saunderson had been heard to whisper that at the banquet he would play a greater part than was good for him. By six o’clock on the evening of the thirteenth the bridge was cleared and the iron gates swung to, to be opened only by the golden key in the hand of the Deputy-Lieutenant.

At eight o’clock the tide was coming in fast, battling against a boisterous south wind that shook the surface of the water into waves, and tossed back the spray from their crests high up the massive stone pillars of the bridge.

Jack Hodges and his master, sitting at supper in the cottage, were thinking of the same thing: the old, forsaken ferry, rocking and tugging at her chain, as if anxious to be gone from a scene in which she had no part.

‘Mr. Embley, sir,’ said Jack at length, ‘do ‘ee think as anyone’ll want to cross to-night?’

‘Why dost ask, boy?’

The old man shot a quick glance at his face, and turned on him suddenly in a vivid flash of scorn.

‘Thou be’st afeared, boy! thou be’st afeared!’

‘No, Mr. Embley; but——’

‘Aye, I say, thou be’st afeared. Thou, that do work Simeon Embley’s Witford Ferry, be’st afeared o’ a bit o’ wind!’

‘Well, sir, them there two or three links be main thin, nigh rotted away by now; and ‘tis all as I can do to keep the water out on ‘un too. Ever since the small boat was broke up the ‘ole in the bottom on ‘er’s got bigger and bigger with bringin’ ‘er to in low tide; and them links couldn’t ‘ardly stand the extra work.’

The old man was growing restless. He hobbled up and down the room, leering strangely at the boy.

'Them links, Jack,' he said at last; 'where 'bouts be they?'

'Right opposite the nearest pillar o' the bridge, Mr. Embley.'

'Which pillar? Nearest this side, or nearest t'other?'

'This side, Mr. Embley.'

'Right opposite the nearest pillar o' this side.'

A rude shock of wind made the frail cottage stagger, and the boy's face blanched; for with it came a distinct call:

'Ferry, ahoy! Ferry!'

'Well, why don't 'ee go?' asked Simeon sharply.

Jack rose from his chair.

'All right; I be goin', he said sulkily.

'Thou be'st afeared!' came the retort. "'T ain't no use sayin' nay to it; thou be'st afeared!'

'Well, then, I be! I be sure as them links won't 'old out, last crossin' or no; but I ain't a goin' to stop for that.'

'Ferry! Hi! ferry!'

The sharp voice rang out again, and the sound of a heavy footstep came up the path to the door.

Jack lit the lantern.

'Come back!' cried Simeon, as the boy's hand fumbled with the latch. 'I be goin'.'

'Eh?' cried Jack, incredulous.

'I be goin', I tell 'ee. Go to thy bed, boy. 'Tis the last crossin' o' the ferry, and I be goin'.'

A rough hand shook the door. Jack handed the lantern to his master. The old man stepped out into the darkness.

'Well, my dilatory friend!' cried the voice. 'Am I really to have the pleasure of being conducted across the river by you? 'Pon my word, this is quite a sentimental occasion! The last crossing of the ferry! And to think that I, the architect of the new bridge, should have the honour of being the last passenger! But that was my little scheme. It is a treat I have been promising myself for some time. I sleep to-night in Tytherington, in order to be here early to-morrow for the great occasion.'

He reeled a little in his walk, while the old man trudged silent before him.

'Beautiful!' he exclaimed, as he stepped on board the ferry. 'Beautiful!' He waved a fat hand towards the bridge, now almost invisible in the darkness. 'And I designed it!'

The bow of the ferry was nearly opposite the first pillar of the bridge. Simeon Embley leaned all his weight against the revolving handle. The ferry stopped dead.

'You designed 'un, eh?'

The tide was at rest between flow and ebb, but the wind beat so fiercely down stream that the chain from bank to bank leapt free of the water, and the ferry lurched away till the grey pillar of the bridge loomed suddenly overhead. Choppy waves began to break over the side, and the roar of the water filled the valley.

'You designed 'un, eh?'

The light of the lantern fell full on the architect, leaving the speaker's face in shadow. Thus it was that Mr. Braxon never learned his danger. For a moment the old man rested. Then suddenly he set to work again with all his strength.

'Tweren't 'is fault,' he muttered. 'And that wouldn't do I no good, neither.'

He found himself, at last, upon the further bank, alone. He watched out of sight the lamps of the hired carriage that took Mr. Braxon to Tytherington, and when the wind had drowned the rumble of the wheels he turned the lantern on to the coin in his hand. A sovereign! He threw it in the mud and stamped on it; ground it in with his heel, picked it up again, and sent it flying far out into the roaring water.

The tide had turned, and the base of the nearest pillar of the bridge was marked by a tumbling block of foam. With wind and water both sweeping northwards to the sea it was hard work to keep the ferry moving along the bellying chain.

The first pillar was passed at length, and then the second. Simeon worked always with his eyes fixed on the third, that nearest his own bank of the river. Slower and slower still went the wheel, till opposite the third grey mass it stopped altogether. Simeon sat down and waited.

A minute dragged itself out. He bent again to the wheel, and the ferry moved on a few yards towards the bank, then back to where it had stopped before. Again he waited, and again the chain held.

The third time and it was done. The rattle of a link falling upon the boards, the long roar of the chain as it flew from the blocks, and ferry and ferryman were being whirled away down stream. In an instant they struck full against the grey stone pillar of the bridge. Simeon reached out his hands to beat and tear at the unfeeling mass. Then came a sound of splitting wood, and the jagged edges of broken planks swept on towards the sea.

HAROLD CHILD.

The Re-arisen Mother,

OR THE RETURN OF THE DEAD.

(From the Danish.)

SIR THOMAS to the Isle he rade,
(I once was young mysel')
 There he fell in love wi' a dainty maid,
(Fair words please mony a hert).

They lived together for years seven, *(I once)*
 An' sax fair bairns to them were given, *(Fair words)*

But Death it cam' into that lan'
 And stole awa' fair Lilian.

Sir Thomas he rides to the Isle again,
 An' anither may for himsel' has ta'en.

He's married the may, an' hame they ride,
 But an ill-woman is the new-made bride.

When she cam' to the door an' lichtit doun,
 The sax wee bairns stood greetin' roun';

The tears ran doun their cheeks sae sma'—
 She has lifted her foot and pushed them awa'.

She gave nae meat to these bairnies puir,
 Sayin' 'Hunger an' thirst ye shall a' endure.'

She took frae them their bolsters blae,
 An' said 'Ye shall lie in the bare strae.'

She took frae them the big wax-licht,
 'Ye shall lie in the dark in the mirkest nicht.'

Far into the nicht the bairnies grat,
The Mither below the Mools heard that,

That heard the Dead in the yird as she lay :
 ' Now I maun to my bairnies gae.'

The Dead gaed to the Lord an' did say :
 ' An' mayna I to my bairnies gae ? '

She urged Him sae lang
 That He let her gang.

' But thou shalt return when the cock doth craw,
 Nae langer shalt thou bide awa'.'

She rose in her grave an' pushed at the wa',
 An' the wa's an' the door she has riven in twa.

As she was ganging through the toun
 The dogs yelped loudly up an' doun.

When she cam' to the door o' the hoose sae fair
 Her eldest dochter stood waiting there.

' Why stand at the door, my dochter dear ?
 An' how do your puir wee sisters fare ? '

' Thou surely art nae mither o' mine—
 My mither was baith fair an' fine.

My mither was fair wi' cheeks sae red,
 But thou art wan an' like the dead.'

' How should I be fair an' fine ?
 'Tis death has bleached these cheeks o' mine.

How should I be white an' red ?
 Sae lang hae I been lyin' dead.'

She cam' ben the hoose her bairns to seek,
 Saw the tears rinnin' doun ilk bairnie's cheek.

The first she doudled, the second she kist,
 The third she cuddled, the fourth she drest,

The fifth she lifted upon her knee,
 As though she would nurse her young babie.

She said to her eldest dochter then :
 ' Gae bid Sir Thomas to me come ben.'

An' when he cam' into that room sae bare
She spak' to him wi' anger sair :

'I left behind me baith yill and bread—
My puir wee bairns ye haena fed ;

I left behind me bolsters blae—
My puir bairns lie in the prickly strae ;

I left behind me the big wax-licht—
My bairns lie their lane in the mirkest nicht.

If I hae to return when I've gaed awa',
A great mischance shall ye besa'.

Now doth craw the cock sae red—
To the kirkyard maun a' the dead ;

Now doth craw the cock sae black—
Heaven's gates are now flung back ;

Now doth craw the cock sae white—
And I can nae langer bide.'

Whenever the dogs were barkin' loud
They gave the bairnies drink an' food ;

At the first yelpin' o' the pack
They thocht the Dead was comin' back ;

An' when they heard their waefu' howls
They feared the *Mither below the Mools.*

A. G. GILCHRIST.

The Author of 'Monsieur Tonson.'

'NEVER have a porch to your paper.' Acting upon this excellent injunction of the late Master of Balliol, we may at once explain that *Monsieur Tonson* is the title of a long-popular recitation in rhyme of the Wolcot and Colman order. It relates how, in the heyday of hoaxes and practical joking, a wag, called King in the poem, badgers an unfortunate French refugee in St. Giles's with repeated nocturnal inquiries for an imaginary 'Mr. Thompson,' until at length his persecuted victim flies the house. And here comes in the effective point of the story. After a protracted absence abroad, the tormentor returns to London, and the whim seizes him to knock once more at the old door with the old question. By an extraordinary coincidence the Frenchman has just resumed residence in his former dwelling,

Without one thought of the relentless foe
 Who, fiend-like, haunted him so long ago,
 Just in his former trim he now appears :
 The waistcoat and the nightcap seemed the same,
 With rushlight, as before, he creeping came,
 And KING's detested voice astonish'd hears, —

the result being that he takes flight again, 'and ne'er is heard of more.' The author of this 'merry jape' was John Taylor, the oculist and journalist; and it originated in an anecdote, either founded on fact or invented by a Governor of Jamaica. After a prosperous career in prose, Taylor versified it for Fawcett, the comedian, who was giving recitations at the Freemasons' Tavern. It had an extraordinary vogue; was turned by Moncrieff into a farce (in which Gattie took the leading part of Monsieur Morbleu, the Frenchman); was illustrated by Robert Cruikshank, and still, we believe, makes fugitive appearance in popular 'Reciters.' By describing himself on the title-page of his Memoirs as the 'Author of *Monsieur Tonson*', its writer plainly regarded it as his chief

title to fame; and whether one agrees with him or not, it may safely be taken as a pretext for some account of the gossiping and discursive volumes which contain his recollections.

John Taylor's grandfather, also John, was a person of considerable importance in his day, being indeed none other than the notorious oculist or 'Ophthalmiater' known as the 'Chevalier' Taylor. Irreverent persons seem to have hinted that, as a matter of fact, this new-fangled Ophthalmiater meant no more than old Quack 'writ large'; and one William Hogarth, generally on the side of the irreverent, hitched the Chevalier into a famous satirical etching which collectors entitle indifferently *A Consultation of Physicians or The Company of Undertakers*. Here the gifted recipient (as per advertisement) of so many distinctions, 'Pontifical, Imperial, and Royal,' appears ignobly with Mrs. Mapp, the Epsom bonesetter, and that celebrated Dr. Ward, referred to by Fielding, whose pill (like a popular nostrum of our own day) had the faculty of posting at once to the part affected. Yet the Chevalier, despite his vanity and a fondness for fine clothes, which made him fair game for the mocker, was undoubtedly a man of ability. Apart from the circumstance that he had been a pupil of Cheselden, the anatomist, he was really a very skilful operator for cataract, and wrote a long list of works or pamphlets on the eye. He was a familiar figure in the different Courts of Europe for his cures, real and imaginary, the story of which he relates—without much 'diffidence in recording his own talents and achievements,' says his grandson—in three volumes of *Memoirs*,¹ having a longer title-page than that of *Pamela*. Judging from his own account (which should probably be taken with the fullest allowance of cautionary salt), his experiences must have been remarkable, and his visiting-list unusually varied. He affirms, without much detail, that he knew Lord Bath and Jack Sheppard; Mary Tofts, the rabbit-breeder, and Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. He also professed acquaintance with Marshal Saxe, with Pöllnitz of the *Virginians*, with Theodore, the bankrupt King of Corsica, with Boerhaave, Albinus, Pope, Voltaire, La Fontaine, Metastasio, Farinelli, and so forth. (As to La Fontaine, there is clearly some mistake, since that pleasing fabulist departed this life about eight years before the Chevalier was born.) He was present, he says, at the execution of Counsellor Layer for high

¹ *History of the Travels and Adventures of the Chevalier John Taylor, Ophthalmiater, etc.* London: Williams, 1761-2. This must not be confused with the *Life* in two volumes published by Cooper in 1761, a coarse catchpenny invention by Lord Chesterfield's profligate protégé, the bricklayer poet, Henry Jones.

treason, and he asserts that he was actually in the Old Bailey upon that memorable occasion when Blake (*alias Blueskin*) tried to cut the throat of Jonathan Wild. Having seen many men and cities, and full of honours, chiefly of foreign manufacture, the Chevalier died in a convent at Prague in 1780. He can scarcely be said to have wanted a *vates sacer*, for Churchill mentions him in *The Ghost*, and Walpole gave him an epigram :—

Why Taylor the quack calls himself *Chevalier*
 'Tis not easy a reason to render ;
 Unless blinding eyes, that he thinks to make clear,
 Demonstrates he's but a *Pretender*.

His only son, John Taylor the Second, was also an oculist, but not of equal eminence, although one of his cures—that of a boy born blind—obtained the honour of a pamphlet by Oldys, the antiquary, and a portrait by Worlidge, the etcher. At the Chevalier's death John Taylor applied for the post, which his father had held, of oculist to King George III., but the appointment was given to the Baron de Wenzel, one of the Chevalier's pupils, who had been fortunate enough to operate successfully on the old Duke of Bedford, who was so terribly mauled by 'Junius.' John Taylor the Second was succeeded by John Taylor the Third, the 'Author of *Monsieur Tonson*.' Beginning life as an oculist, like his father and grandfather, he achieved considerable reputation in that capacity, and by good luck obtained at Wenzel's death the very appointment which his father had failed to secure. But in mid-career he relinquished his profession for journalism. For many years he was proprietor and editor of the *Sun* newspaper, and he also published a volume of verses. But his chief reputation was that of a *raconteur*. 'In his latter days,' says the *Literary Gazette*, in its obituary notice of May 19, 1832, 'he was, perhaps, as entertaining in conversation, with anecdote, playfulness, and satire, as any man within the bills of mortality.' Many of his good things are no doubt preserved in the two volumes of *Records of My Life*, which appeared shortly after his death, and to the compilation of which he was impelled by the perfidy of a quondam partner and the invitation of an 'eminent publisher,' presumably Mr. Bull, of Holles Street, whose imprint the volumes bear. His recollections are set down without any other method than a certain rough grouping; they have the garrulity and the repetitions of the advanced age at which they were penned; but they contain, in addition to a good

deal that he had heard from others, much that had come within his own experiences. As he professes strict veracity, it is from the latter class that we shall chiefly make selection, beginning, as in duty bound, with the anecdotes of literary men.

Concerning Johnson and Goldsmith he has not much to say beyond the fact that, as a boy, he had once delivered a letter for the latter at the Temple, but without seeing him. It is, however, to the 'Author of *Monsieur Tonson*' that we owe the historic episode of the borrowed guinea slipped under the door, which recurs so prominently in all Goldsmith's biographies; while he tells one anecdote of Johnson which, as far as we can discover, has escaped Dr. Birkbeck Hill. According to Dr. Messenger Monsey, physician of Chelsea Hospital—a rough Abernethy sort of man, whom his admirers compared with Swift—upon one occasion, when the age of George III. was under discussion, Johnson burst in with a 'Pooh, what does it signify when such an animal was born, or whether he had ever been born at all?' an ultra-Jacobitical utterance which the Whig narrator did not neglect to accentuate by reminding his hearers that it was to this very 'usurper' that Johnson owed his pension. But Monsey did not like the Doctor, and the story is probably exaggerated. Then there is a story of Dr. Parr, in which is concerned another of the Johnson circle, Edmund Burke. During the Hastings trial Parr was effusive (Taylor says 'diffusive') about the speeches of Sheridan and Fox, but silent as to Burke's, a circumstance which led that great orator to suggest politely that he presumed Parr found it faultless. 'Not so, Edmund,' was the reply, in Parr's best Johnsonese; 'your speech was oppressed by epithet, dislocated by parenthesis, and debilitated by amplification,' a knock-me-down answer to which 'Edmund' made no recorded rejoinder. There is a touch of the lexicographic manner in another anecdote, this time of Hugh Kelly, the staymaker turned dramatist and barrister, who was so proud of his silver that he kept even his spurs upon the sideboard. Examining a lady at the trial of George Barrington, the pickpocket, Kelly inquired, 'Pray, madam, how could you, in the immensity of the crowd, determine the identity of the man?' Finding that his question was unintelligible to the witness, he reduced it to 'How do you know he was the man?' 'Because,' came the prompt reply, 'I caught his hand in my pocket.' Taylor apparently knew both the Boswells, father and son, and, indeed, playfully claims part authorship in the famous *Life* upon the ground that he had suggested the substitution of 'compre-

hending' for 'containing' in the title-page; and certainly, if that be proof, 'comprehending' is there and 'containing' is not. He had also relations with Wilkes, whom he praises for his wit and learning. For his learning we have the witness of his *Catullus*, but his wit seems, like much wit of his day, to have been largely based upon brutality. Once a certain over-goaded Sir Watkin Lewes said angrily to him, 'I'll be your butt no longer.' Wilkes at once mercilessly retorted, 'With all my heart. I never like an empty one.'

Wolcot and Caleb Whitefoord of the 'Cross Readings,' Richard Owen Cambridge and Richard Cumberland, all figure in the *Records*. Taylor thinks that the famous Whitefoord addition to *Retaliation* was really by Goldsmith—a supposition which is not shared by modern Goldsmith critics. Of Wolcot there is a lengthy account, the most striking part of which refers to his last hours. Taylor asked him, on his deathbed, whether anything could be done for him. 'His answer, delivered in a deep and strong tone, was, Bring back my youth,' after which he fell into the sleep in which he died. Cambridge Taylor seems to have known but slightly, and apart from a long story, for the authenticity of which he does not vouch, has nothing memorable to say of him, except that he declared he had written his *Scribleriad* while under the hands of his hairdresser—a piece of fine gentleman affection which suggests M. Oronte's *Je n'ai demeuré qu'un quart d'heure à le faire*. But he tells a story of Cumberland which is at least well invented. Once, so it runs, Cumberland stumbled on entering a box at Drury Lane, and Sheridan sprang to his assistance. 'Ah, sir!' said the writer of the *West Indian*, 'you are the only man to assist a *falling* author.' 'Rising, you mean,' returned Sheridan, thus employing, either by malice or misadventure, almost the exact words which, in the *Critic*, he had put into the mouth of 'Sir Fretful Plagiary'—a character admittedly modelled upon Cumberland himself. Sheridan, too, supplies more than one page of these recollections, and their writer professes to have been present when he (Sheridan) spoke as follows concerning a pamphleteer who had written against him:—'I suppose that Mr. —— thinks I am angry with him, but he is mistaken, for I never harbour resentment. If his punishment depended on me, I would show him that the dignity of my mind was superior to all vindictive feelings. Far should I be from wishing to inflict a capital punishment upon him, grounded on his attack upon me; but yet on account of his general character and conduct, and as a

warning to others, I would merely order him to be publicly whipped three times, to be placed in the pillory four times, to be confined in prison seven years, and then, as he would enjoy freedom the more after so long a confinement, I would have him transported for life.'

At the date of the above deliverance, the scene of which was a tavern in Portugal Street—perhaps the now vanished Grange public-house—Sheridan was lessee of Drury Lane Theatre. In later years Taylor was to become acquainted with another Drury Lane magnate, Lord Byron, with whom he corresponded and exchanged poems (the letters are in Moore). Of Lady Byron he reports that Mrs. Siddons, whom he regarded as an unimpeachable authority, assured him that if she had no other reason to admire his Lordship's judgment and taste, she should be fully convinced of both by his choice of a wife—a sentiment which should certainly be set down to the credit of a lady who is by no means overpraised. Among the Portugal Street roisterers was Richard Wilson, the painter. According to Taylor, he must have been vintner as well, since most of the wine came from his cellar in Lincoln's Inn Fields (Great Queen Street), the company having condemned the tavern beverages. Apart from the fact that Wilson's 'favourite fluid,' like Churchill's, was porter, this particular is more out of keeping with his traditional lack of pence than another, also related by Taylor, in which he says that, upon one occasion, having procured Wilson a commission, he was obliged to lend him the money to buy brushes and canvas. With artists, however, Taylor's acquaintance was not large. He knew Peters the Academician, afterwards the Rev. ; and he knew Ozias Humphry the miniaturist, who in his old age became totally blind. With West and his rival, Opie (who, like Wilson, lived in Queen Street), he was apparently on familiar terms, and he was often the guest of the former at the dinners which the Royal Academy of that day were accustomed to have on the anniversary of Queen Charlotte's birthday. Of West he speaks warmly; does not mention his vanity, and attributes much of his baiting by Peter Pindar to that satirist's partiality for Opie. Fuseli, another resident in Great Queen Street, and Northcote, also flit through the *Records*, and there is reference to a supper at Reynolds's, where it was idly debated whether Johnson would have written the *Reflections on the French Revolution* better than Burke, and where, on the topic *De mortuis*, Reynolds propounded the practical dictum that 'the dead were nothing and the living everything.' But, on

the whole, the annalist's memories of artists are of meagre interest, and the only compact anecdote related of a member of the profession refers to the architect known popularly as 'Capability' Brown. Once when Lord Chatham, disabled by the gout, was hobbling painfully down the stairs of St. James's Palace, Brown had the good fortune to assist him to his carriage. Lord Chatham thanked him, adding pleasantly, 'Now, sir, go and adorn your country.' To which Brown the capable replied promptly, 'Go you, my Lord, and save it.'

Of anecdotes of actors and actresses the 'Author of *Monsieur Tonson*' has no lack. As already stated, he was much in request for prologues and epilogues; he was an active and intelligent dramatic critic, and was, moreover, intimate with most of the leading players of his day. To make any adequate summary of so large a body of theatrical gossip would be impossible; but a few stories may be selected concerning some of the older men. Of Garrick, whom Taylor's father had seen when he first came out at Goodman's Fields, and regarded as the Shakespeare of actors, he tells a number of stories which, unfamiliar when the *Records* were published, are now fairly well known. Taylor was, however, the first, we believe, to record that effective anecdote of Mrs. Clive, who, watching Garrick from behind the scenes, between smiles and tears, burst out at last into emphatic and audible expression of her belief that he could 'act a gridiron'; and Taylor also says that once, when his father was performing an operation for cataract, Garrick, who was present, so enthralled the nervous patient by his humour that he forgot both his fears and his pain. Of Garrick's Lady Macbeth, Mrs. Pritchard, Taylor, deriving his information from his father, speaks highly, and considers that Johnson degraded her memory by describing her as 'an ignorant woman, who talked of her *gownd*.' (Mrs. Pritchard had acted the heroine in the great man's *Irene*, and it is possible that he was prejudiced.) To Macklin, another celebrated Macbeth—being, indeed, the first who performed that part in the old Scottish garb—Taylor makes frequent reference. He saw him in Iago, in Sir Paul Pliant of the *Double Dealer*, and in other characters; but held that he was 'too theoretical for nature. He had three pauses in his acting—the first, moderate; the second, twice as long; but his last, or "grand pause," as he styled it, was so long that the prompter, on one occasion, thinking his memory failed, repeated the cue . . . several times, and at last so loud as to be heard by the audience.' Whereupon

Macklin rushed from the stage and knocked him down, exclaiming, "The fellow interrupted me in my grand pause." Quin, Macklin's rival, was also given to inordinate pauses, and once, while acting Horatio in Rowe's *Fair Penitent* (the play in which George Primrose of Wakefield was to have made his *début*), he delayed so long to reply to the challenge of Lothario that a man in the gallery bawled out, 'Why don't you give the gentleman an answer, whether you will or no?' Taylor cites a good many instances of Quin's *gourmandise* and of his ready, but rather full-flavoured, wit. He is perhaps best when on his dignity. Once at Allen's of Prior Park (Fielding's 'Allworthy'), the imperious Warburton attempted to degrade the guest into the actor by pressing Quin to recite something. Quin accordingly spoke a speech from Otway which contained the lines—

Honest men
Are the soft easy cushions on which knaves
Repose and fatten,

which lines he delivered with so unmistakable an application to Allen and Warburton that he was never again troubled by the divine for a specimen of his declamatory powers. Another story told by Taylor of Quin may be quoted, because it introduces Mrs. Clive. She had invited Quin to stay at Cliveden (Little Strawberry), of which the appointments were on as minute a scale as those of Petit-Trianon. When he had inspected the garden she asked him if he had noticed her pond. 'Yes, Kate,' he replied, 'I have seen your *basin*, but did not see a washball.' Taylor seems surprised that Walpole should have been so much attached to Mrs. Clive, whose personal charms were small, and whose manners (he says) were rough and vulgar. He quotes, with apparent approval, some unpublished lines by Peter Pindar, criticising the epitaph in which Walpole declared that Comedy had died with his friend.

Horace, of Strawberry Hill I mean, not Rome,
Lo! all thy geese are swans, I do presume;
Truth and thy verses seem not to agree;
Know, Comedy is hearty, all alive;
The Comic Muse no more expired with Clive
Than dame Humility will die with thee.'

But one need no more swear to the truth of an epitaph than of a song. Catherine Clive had humour and good humour; her

indefatigable needle was always employed in the decoration of Walpole's Gothic mansion, and he probably knew thoroughly what he was about. As a near neighbour she was more amusing than a blue-stocking, less dangerous than a beauty, and more useful to him than either.

Except for the 'gridiron' anecdote, however, Mrs. Clive does not play any material part in the recollections of the 'Author of *Monsieur Tonson*.' With a later luminary, Miss Farren, he was not acquainted, although he had met her once with Lord Derby (whom she afterwards married), and had admired her pathos in Miss Lee's *Chapter of Accidents*. But he seems to have been on intimate terms with Mrs. Abington, both in her prime and also in her decline, for he was present when she degraded herself by acting Scrub in the *Beaux' Stratagem*, and he had dined with her at Mrs. Jordan's, when she talked unceasingly and enthusiastically of Garrick—a circumstance which, considering the trouble she had given him in his lifetime, may perhaps be regarded in the light of an expiatory exercise. Taylor also knew Mrs. Siddons, of whom he speaks warmly, saying that he had been intimate with her for years, and had many of her letters, 'with which even her request would not induce him to part.' He was, in fact, connected with the Kemble family by marriage, his first wife, Mrs. Duill, having been a Miss Satchell, whose sister had married Stephen Kemble, a huge man who could act Falstaff without stuffing, and had gone through all the experiences of a strolling player, even to breakfasting in a Yorkshire turnip-field. Of John Kemble and Charles Kemble and his wife there is much in the *Records*, but most of it has grown familiar by long repetition. There is also much of other actors and actresses, as might be expected from the man who had seen Dodd in *Sir Andrew Aguecheek*, Palmer as Sneer in *The Critic*, Lewis as Mercutio, and 'Gentleman' Smith as Charles in the *School for Scandal*. But his dateless record is difficult to follow. Moreover, the present paper might easily be made too long.

In the foregoing haphazard plunges into the Taylorian brani-
pie we have depended mainly, as promised at the outset, upon the writer's personal experiences, rather than upon the miscellaneous anecdotes. But we have by no means exhausted even the personal experiences. Not to mention political magnates like Lord Chatham, Lord North, and Lord Chesterfield, whom we have almost wholly neglected, there are numerous references to characters difficult to class, but not the less diverting to recall. As a boy, Taylor had seen Cōan, the dwarf of Churchill's

Rosciad, who lodged at a tavern in the Five Fields (now Eaton Square) kept by one of the Pinchbecks, who invented the so-named metal; and he remembered that debased specimen of humanity, Buckhorse, the boxer, whose humour it was to allow the Eton boys to punch his battered features at a shilling a head. He had also visited the famous Mrs. Teresa Cornelys, when that favourite of the Nobility and Gentry had declined upon evil days and was selling asses' milk in Knightsbridge; he had known intimately a person who (like Horace Walpole) had gone in danger of his life from the 'gentleman highwayman,' James Maclean; and at Henry Angelo's, in Soho, he had met the Chevalier D'Eon, still wearing his feminine attire, but old and greatly reduced in circumstances. It is singular that, with all his dramatic proclivities, the 'Author of *Monsieur Tonson*' should never have attempted a play. But as far as can be ascertained, his only contribution to stage literature—prologues and epilogues excepted—is the part of the rhyming Butler in Mrs. Inchbald's version of Kotzebue's *Das Kind der Liebe*—the *Lover's Vows*, which figures so conspicuously in Miss Austen's *Mansfield Park*.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

The Story of the 'Donna' *from 1883 to 1897.*

I. BY THE EDITOR.

FOR some years it has been becoming more and more evident that the exceptional distress in the neighbourhood of the Docks, which the 'Donna' was started to relieve, has been growing less acute. It has never been contemplated that her work should be carried on indefinitely. As the readers of this magazine know, the operations of the 'Donna' are strictly charitable. The food is sold to out-of-work men below the cost price, the balance being supplied by the readers of the magazine. This is a form of charity which has proved to be of great value in exceptional circumstances, affording as it does to the unemployed a chance of tiding over bad times. But if it were continued permanently it might have a pauperising effect, and work in one direction as much harm as it does good in another.

The following table, giving the number of men who have been served at the 'Donna,' shows that the time has come when her beneficent mission may be said to be accomplished.

TABLE OF NUMBER OF MEN SERVED AT THE 'DONNA' TRUCK.

Month	1885-6	1886-7	1887-8	1888-9	1889-90	1890-91	1891-2	1892-3	1893-4	1894-5	1895-6	1896-7
November	—	12,415	13,899	14,502	10,920	9,011	8,932	8,429	11,750	7,976	8,713	4,210
December	—	12,842	9,799	12,123	8,634	8,702	8,020	6,217	8,197	4,198	3,414	4,047
January	1,600	15,217	13,930	16,414	12,446	9,282	10,226	6,122	7,370	7,474	2,977	3,682
February	3,900	13,337	12,412	12,549	9,524	8,651	7,543	7,954	6,808	5,595	3,456	4,481
March	6,171	14,761	11,123	11,640	9,046	8,222	10,029	8,960	7,378	6,926	3,202	4,446
April	4,972	15,466	11,432	10,481	9,262	8,448	6,042	5,161	5,584	6,688	3,430	3,347
May	2,096	10,110	12,661	11,563	5,714	9,010	5,598	5,590	5,398	3,572	2,789	2,560
June	1,300	8,069	8,973	6,241	5,892	7,241	6,717	3,758	3,337	2,946	2,515	2,573
July	1,238	6,618	13,171	6,516	5,076	7,334	4,037	3,964	3,825	3,504	2,284	3,672
August	—	7,429	13,764	9,261	5,528	7,914	4,774	5,219	6,003	3,224	2,899	6,161
September	6,103 ²	8,523	12,949	8,208	5,922	10,076	5,990	6,537	4,934	2,490	3,153	4,303
October	13,779	18,462	20,275	10,265	9,990	11,108	7,408	7,507	5,232	5,076	4,923	8,475
	41,159	143,269	154,418	129,763	97,954	105,002	85,316	75,418	75,817	59,629	38,755	48,957

¹ The 'Donna' closed in August 1886.

² September, 1886, moved from Tower Hill to London Bridge.

The number of portions sold in the year has sunk from over 154,000 in 1887-8 to 48,957 in 1896-7. The numbers for last year show an increase over 1895-6, but not of a serious character, and the steady decrease shows that the charity has not been abused—that as men got employment they ceased to buy food at the price which was only intended for those who were out of work. It has therefore been decided that the moment is at hand when the 'Donna' may cease her daily journey. It is intended to carry on the work through the winter, and to wind it up when spring returns.

The statement of account (p. 258) shows a deficit of 25*l.* 7*s.* 10*½d.* on November 1. The Sisters issued an appeal in their organ, the *Church Weekly*, on November 19 for subscriptions to the 'Donna' to wipe off this deficit and to carry the work on through the winter. The Editor will be glad to receive any sums sent by his readers for this purpose, and to forward them to the Sisters up to March 31. If the Sisters determine to carry on the 'Donna' after that date, it will be on their own responsibility, as the Editor does not consider that he is justified in asking his readers to continue the kind support they have hitherto given. Should any balance remain when the final account of the 'Donna' is published, the Editor proposes to ask the Sisters to place it to the credit of their Night Refuge and Women's Workroom. Miss Trench, who was the founder of the 'Donna,' and has been throughout her most ardent and powerful supporter, has kindly consented to contribute the following paper summing up her work.

THE 'DONNA' FOOD-TRUCK ACCOUNT NOVEMBER 1896 TO NOVEMBER 1897

Receipts.

	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Balance in hand, November 1896	163 10 2	Cost of food, 171. 10s. 10d.	71. 8s. 10d.	24 19 8
November, by food sold	8 15 5	Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 5d.; wages, 3d. 14s.	33 16 2	8 16 6
December	11 11 0	Cost of food, 161. 17s. 3d.	bread, 71. 18s.	24 16 3
January	11 11 0	Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 5d. 5s.; wages, 4d. 5s.	9 12 0	34 19 3
February	11 11 0	Tins, 11s.	0 11 0	
March	11 11 0	Cost of food, 181. 0s. 3d.	bread, 81. 18s.	26 18 3
April	11 11 0	Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 5d. 7s.; wages, 4d.	9 9 6	36 7 9
May	11 11 0	Cost of food, 151. 10s. 6d.	bread, 81. 14s.	24 10 10
June	11 11 0	Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 5d. 11s.; wages, 3d. 14s.	8 16 6	33 7 4
July	11 11 0	Cost of food, 181. 13s. 5d.	bread, 91. 19s. 9d.	28 7 2
August	11 11 0	Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 5d. 10s.; wages, 4d. 18s. 6d.	9 14 0	38 1 3
September	11 11 0	Cost of food, 181. 10s. 6d.	bread, 101. 0s. 7d.	28 17 1
October	11 11 0	Extra soup, 11. 9s. 4d.	1 9	41 5 5
By donations, per Magazine	134 19 9	Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 6d. 15s.	6 17 6	
received from other sources	4 14 6	Wages, 4l. 1s. 6d.	4 1 6	
To balance overdrawn	406 3 8 1/2	Cost of food, 131. 18s. 11d.	bread, 81. 10s. 8d.	22 9 7
	25 7 10 1/2	Extra soup, 11c.	wages, 3d. 14s.	4 14 0
		Truck, 2s. 6d.; cooking, 6l.	tins, 17s.	6 19 6
		Cost of food, 101. 13s. 3d.	extra soup, 15s.	11 8 3
		Bread, 71. 12s. 6d.	truck, 2s. 6d.	7 15 0
		Cooking, 5d. 10s.	wages, 4d. 9s. 3d.	9 12 3
		Cost of food, 101. 13s. 7d.	extra soup, 15s.	11 9 7
		Bread, 71. 8s.	wages, 4d. 9s. 9d.	11 12 9
		Truck, 2s. 6d.	cooking, 6l. 15s.	5 17 6
		Cost of food, 151. 16s.	bread, 71. 11s. 3d.	23 7 3
		Truck, 2s. 6d.	cooking, 5d.	8 16 6
		Cost of food, 251. 13s. 6d.	bread, 131. 1s. 2d.	38 14 7
		Truck, 2s. 6d.	cooking, 5d.	9 15 0
For Night Refuge, per Magazine	£44 6 0	Cost of food, 221. 16s. 3d.	cooking, 5d.	27 16 8
" Workroom	26 19 0	Truck, 2s. 6d.	wages, 3d. 14s.	13 18 6
" Needy men and women"	14 1 6	Repairs, 9s.	•	41 3 9
" Day Shelter	2 2 0	•	0 9 0	
	1 3 6			
				£481 11 7

II. BY THE AUTHOR OF 'CHARLES LOWDER.'

Homeless near a thousand homes they stood,
And near a thousand tables pined, and wanted food.

FOR the last time! There is always sadness, sometimes inexpressible, when these words must be said of that for which we have deeply cared. But such sadness is much mitigated when we feel that the object of our care has fulfilled its purpose, and that it is at least a matter of doubt whether its continuance would not be more harmful than beneficial. For, as the Editor of LONGMAN'S wrote of it in its beginning, 'The *Donna* is strictly a charity, a gift from those that have to those that are willing to work, to help them during their temporary need.'¹ That there is danger of the '*Donna*' becoming a pauperising engine instead of a valuable expedient in exceptional emergency has been decided by those far better fitted to judge in the matter than the writer. It is, indeed, most gratifying that the sales at the '*Donna*' should have sunk in 1896-97 to much less than one-third of those in 1887-88, for this decrease is the best justification of her mission.

I am asked to give a *résumé* in these few pages of the work so perseveringly and generously supported by the readers of LONGMAN'S.

An article appeared in it in August, 1883, giving an account of an expedition made by the writer with three little girls and two older friends to see a work, begun in the cold autumn of 1881, for providing dock labourers with warm food during the half-hour allowed for dinner. For, as one of them said to a friend, 'Us dock labourers ain't allowed off the dock betwixt soon after seven in the morning and half-past four in the afternoon. They've got to search us, yer see, and they don't want the trouble o' doing that twice over. Well, all these hours we never sees a fire. There ain't a bit o' fire or a light allowed all over the whole dock. Yer see the prop'ty is valuable. If a fellow but set light to his pipe he'd have the bobby down on him at once.'

Their need was known to the founders of a restaurant for working men at 42A Dock Street, and they determined to send

¹ LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE, vol. v. p. 329.

trucks to St. Katherine's Dock, and two to London Docks—at Wapping and near Dock Street—for the purpose of selling hot penny dinners to the men. We were told that we must go as assistants, since the customers would dislike mere spectators. Within the gates nearest Dock Street, where I helped, the truck was wheeled up to a small, narrow, wooden shed with sloping roof placed against the dock wall, a counter in front, and just standing room for three inside—the sister in charge, a little girl, and myself. The work of serving out the dinners, which we took part in for the first time, has often been described in the yearly report of the 'Donna' in these pages; but in the docks, instead of a waiting crowd, the space around us was empty until, as twelve o'clock struck, a great bell rang, and almost at once swarms of men seemed to spring out of the ground and gathered round our hut, holding up bowls, jugs, and all kinds of vessels, with 'Penn'orth of beef-soup, please, and bread,' or 'Penn'orth of pea-soup.' It was no pastime to serve them. Not a moment's idleness was possible. The great ladles in each can held just a 'penn'orth,' and we dropped the pence as fast as possible into apron-pockets provided for us. I remember being much struck by the entire absence of rudeness in our very rough and hungry customers, and one picture for ever was photographed on my memory as I glanced across the sister who was next to me to see how my child companion was getting on. 'The crowds of rough men—all types of faces—pressing up to the rude, slight barrier, behind which their young server stood, mounted on an empty box to give her height; the fair little head with its veil of golden locks bending intently over her task, which was most carefully and capably accomplished. The effect of the delicate, refined, child seen in the setting of the heads which surrounded her was very striking, but not inharmonious.' There is no doubt that had she gone alone any day in charge of the stall the most perfect order would have been observed.

But I must not linger over happy memories of our first introduction to a work which led to another of greatest interest, and which had been going on at the time of our visit (in the spring of 1882) for seven months, during which the softening influence of a daily visit from ladies was very remarkable; for when first they came the men made a terrible clamour around the stall, shouting, beseeching, and all but threatening the sisters in hopes of being served first. This, too, in a slack time as to work; and it was much feared that when the wool sales began, and perhaps a

thousand extra hands were put on, there would be such a rush when the bell rang as would upset the stand and the sisters, soup cans and all. However, the only time this happened was one winter's day, when the weather was so terrible that the truck was sent in charge of a trusty employé, a navvy. Truck and stall were quickly taken by storm, cans upset, and food pounced upon, the man in charge being powerless to prevent it.

A lady's presence turns these lions into lambs. 'I wish we could stop bad language on the docks as you do, ma'am,' was said to a Sister by a policeman; and after a fortnight's work in the docks the superintendent of police asked for an interview, thanked the ladies heartily for what they were doing for the men, and told them the dock labourers were all saying, 'Well, there'll be no more starvation in the dock this winter; that's one comfort.' He asked them as a favour to undertake the charge of another stall at the opposite end of the dock.

The 'charity' in this case was in bringing the food within reach of the men, as the penny paid for each portion covered its cost.

But deep compassion had been aroused for those still more to be pitied—the unhired crowd thronging round the dock gates. The captain of a sailing vessel collected enough among his crew to buy and fit up a convenient hand-truck, for which the police found standing-ground on Tower Hill, close by the spot where numbers of unemployed men take up their quarters, and the Sisters undertook to cook the food at their restaurant, which was to supply a hot and sustaining meal for one halfpenny, to the unemployed only.

The truck was called the 'Don,' which was the name of the ship whose captain and crew had bought it, leaving it to the Sisters to provide the food and to dispense it daily. All through the winter of 1882-83 the 'Don' was to be found at its post, its popularity being largely due to the fact that the sellers 'made up ha'porths.'

We paid it a visit, and saw it at work on our way home; and, excellent as was the work for labourers, that which touched our hearts most tenderly in recalling our expedition to the Docks was the thought of the hungry and unhired crowd round the little 'Don.' This also, apparently, touched other hearts, for in LONGMAN'S for November, 1883, a short paper appeared, by the Editor, headed ' "At the Docks": An Appeal,' saying that 'in the August number of this magazine an article was published under the above title,'

and 'so much interest has been aroused in the matter that the Editor has commissioned the Sisters to make the necessary arrangements for starting another truck similar to the "Don" on November 1.' 'A sufficient sum of money,' the Editor added, 'has been guaranteed to start the concern, and the Editor appeals with confidence to the subscribers to this Magazine for sufficient funds to carry it on permanently. All subscriptions will be acknowledged, and all moneys received accounted for, in the Magazine.'

His confidence was amply justified. In the December number of *LONGMAN'S 270*l.* 7*s.* 7*d.** was acknowledged as received for the new truck, which had made its first journey from the restaurant on November 2, and took up its station by the subway at the south-western corner of Tower Hill.

'It must be called the "DONNA," since it is the "Don's" mate,' had been said by one interested in it, and this name was painted on the bright blue truck. 'From the first there was no doubt of the welcome it would receive,' the Editor wrote. 'The labourers just at this spot are engaged for the most part in unloading the orange and fish boats that come into Tower Stairs. They are employed by the hour, at the rate of 4*d.* or 4*½d.* per hour. A man may earn 14*s.* or 15*s.* in a week, or he may earn little or nothing. One man recently earned 14*s.* one week and the next 1*s.* 6*d.* It is this uncertainty which renders the case of these men so hard, and which teaches them to appreciate so keenly the friendly help given them by the "Don" at the south-eastern and now by the "DONNA" at the south-western corner of Tower Hill. The initial expense of starting the "DONNA," in providing the tins and necessary utensils and erecting the shed by the subway, is 20*l.* The cost of an additional boiler in Dock Street Restaurant is also 20*l.* The permanent cost of maintaining the truck depends upon the number who use it. At present the loss is 3*l.* per week. This implies a terrible amount of destitution, as it is to be borne in mind that only those who are out of work are served at the "DONNA."'¹

As the 'loss' meant the number of halfpennies needed for each meal, besides the halfpenny paid by the buyer to cover its cost, 3*l.* gave 1,440 meals sold each week. The 'DONNA' had scarcely taken up her position for the first time before a cluster of delighted men gathered round her.

'So the cheap food's come to our part,' they said. 'There's

¹ *LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE*, vol. iii. pp. 334-336.

nowhere in London that you can get a bigger ha'porth than here.' Besides the 1,440 weekly average of meals sold to the unemployed at this time, some were sold to those in work, but always at full price. 'Why, Sister, I got this here basin of soup for a ha'penny yesterday, and to-day it's a penny!' a customer remarked.

'You are in full work, are you not?'

'Well, yes, and that's true.'

'You hear our rule, then?'

'Well, I don't complain. It's fair, I own; we oughter pay more than the poor chaps as can't get a job.'

A unique customer was once led up to the 'Donna' by its master—an ostrich. Two rolls were bought for its dinner. Full price, of course; LONGMAN'S contributions were not to be taxed in this case.

About this time a case mentioned in LONGMAN'S, in connection with the 'Donna,' was taken up by its readers—a little boy, 'Willie Hardingham,' supposed to be hopelessly crippled and paralysed from a blow from a brick. Through the generosity of readers of this Magazine he was sent to the Clifton Home for Crippled Children for a year; and at the end of that time, his case being pronounced curable, to the Bloomsbury Square Hospital for Paralysis. Before this kindness there was nothing before him but the workhouse for life.

The first statement of accounts given by the Editor, in January 1885, for fourteen months, showed that 479*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.* had been entrusted to him by his readers to support the 'Donna'; and now, for twice seven years, that support has never failed.

After three years' work on Tower Hill the 'Donna's' station was moved to Lower Thames Street, under London Bridge, where the need for her services was most crying, and where a little yard enclosed on two sides by high warehouses and iron palings, and on the other sides with a strong gate, was given by the police for the hut shop. More out-of-work men were served there on its arrival than at any of the other food-trucks during the year. They were so closely packed together in the yard that it was most difficult for them to move their arms to feed themselves when they had got their soup. I have served them there, and know what the scene is. To this spot, for eleven years now, the 'Donna' has made her daily journeys.

'It is with mingled feelings,' he wrote in January 1886, 'that the Editor presents his second annual statements of accounts and record of the work done by the "Donna"—feelings of regret that

the need for this work of mercy should still exist, and feelings of thankfulness and pride that so noble and successful an effort to carry it on should have been made by the readers of the Magazine.' In January 1887 the Editor remarked that 'trucks for the unemployed are the pressure gauges of the East End labour market,' and that the huge increase of men served in the previous March and April showed the effect of the severe and long frost that spring. In March 6,171 men were served, and in April 4,972, only 1,600 having been served in January; and in August we were able to close for a month, beginning again in September with over 6,000 customers, which rose in October to nearly 14,000.

The work became very hard during the acute distress in the winter of 1887-8, and the number of men served rose to an average, for twelve months, of 2,969 weekly, or over 424 daily. This average, of course, gives an immensely larger number during the winter months, when 800 or 900 men often thronged round the 'Donna.' But even in August 1888, when I went to serve there, wishing to see it at work, not as formerly in cold weather, but in the summer, the press was very great: 13,764 men were served that month (only 7,429 having been served in August 1887). In October the number rose to 20,275, an average of 654 daily; and this although two more trucks for the unemployed had been set up—'The Dark Green,' outside one of the dock gates, supported by Colonel Maxwell and his regiment, the Tower Hamlets Militia; and 'The Cage,' opened by the Sisters, close to another hiring-ground near the docks. 'I wish that all who give trucks would support them as LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE supports its truck,' a Sister said to me; 'we are hard pressed to keep them all going when the men pay only half the cost of the food.'

The kindness of the readers of LONGMAN'S has been still more extended. In the number for January 1887 it was mentioned that the Sisters had been forced by the prevailing distress to help their poor customers to find food-pence by giving employment to their wives, and had opened workrooms where poor women were kept constantly employed at needlework. An account was given of a visit to one of these work-parties in a very poor house in Cannon Street Road, where, in a cosy, pleasant room, about thirty women were busy with their needles, while a lady read to them from some entertaining book. They are paid daily for their work, whether it be sold or not; but a sale is generally found for it amongst the less poor, who are glad to get good ready-made

garments, free of the sweater's profits. The workroom is usually closed in summer, but in August 1887 the distress was so terrible that the Sisters felt forced to open it at once, as the best way of giving some relief. From that time to the present considerable sums have been sent through this Magazine for the workroom.

Still more has been given to the Night Refuge, opened on December 20, 1887. 'Where do you generally sleep at nights?' is usually met with answers from the unemployed: 'Anywhere,' 'Nowhere,' 'Under arches,' 'In empty railway trucks when we can,' 'By the sugar refinery.'

'Why this last?' we inquired.

'Well, lady, I'll tell you. They don't let out the fires there, so the air comes up warm and comforting, and there's a wall near where a lot of us stand, and button up our coats and tie a hand-kerchief round our necks, and then put our heads against the wall and get to sleep as best we can.'

'Standing?'

'Yes, standing, lady. The publics are open till midnight; but then, wet or fine, frost or cold, we've all got to turn out.'

The Night Refuge, or 'Friend in Need,' a large three-storied building, formerly a gun factory, in Tenter Street, Whitechapel, is not luxurious, but it is clean and warm, and contains 160 beds: these are canvas hammocks, stretched between two iron bars about six feet apart, which run round three sides of long rooms, a leather coverlet and pillow being allotted to each bed. The rooms were well warmed by large, bright, open stoves; ample provision was made for ablutions, and a large room on the ground floor was turned into a sitting-room, with benches and tables, games and illustrated newspapers, and the walls bright with pictures. The walls of the building are of abnormal thickness, no doubt to support the weight of the guns, and this makes the rooms easier to warm and to keep warm. It is opened every evening at six; at first it was entirely free, but this was so much abused by mere tramps that twopence is now charged for lodging, a supper of pea-soup or tea at 7 P.M., and a breakfast of cocoa at 6.30 A.M., with a large piece of bread at each meal.

Many old soldiers are among the customers at the 'Donna,' and are received at the Refuge. One poor man was sitting in a quiet corner, with head bent down, but a lady's greeting roused him, and he made an unmistakable military salute. 'I am afraid you are ill,' she said. 'Yes, ma'am—ill indeed,' he answered, 'and not used to rough it, worse luck. I'm a soldier, and was invalidated home after

twelve years in India. The day after I landed I was so ill that they took me to hospital, and there I've lain ever since. I came out this afternoon, and should have had to spend the night out of doors if I hadn't heard of this place; a night out would have killed me. Now I've come to the "Friend in Need" until I'm a bit more able to work. Mine was a cavalry regiment, and I can show my discharge. What would suit me best now would be a coachman's place.'

Not long after this man came to one of the food dépôts looking so much brighter that the Sister said to him: 'I am sure you have had some good news.' 'Yes, ma'am,' he replied. 'I didn't like telling you before that I had had the chance to save my colonel's life in action' (I *think* in Egypt). 'He has been very ill, but now I have heard from him; he is coming home, and has written to engage me as his own servant, and I hope never to be like this again. The Refuge seemed meant to save me, for it took me in twice when a night out would have just meant death to me.'

The first year of the Night Refuge work, 1888, was that in which, to judge by our customers, distress became acutest, for, as the Editor wrote, 'the annual record of the doings of the "Donna" forms a barometer by which an estimate may be formed of the state of the labour-market in the East of London. In July 1888 the number of men served rose heavily, and the rise continued till it culminated in October, when the highest monthly number of men ever served by the "Donna," viz. 20,275, was reached.' At the end of 1889 he was able to write that 'this year it is fortunately possible to report that the barometer is rising,' the number served in October 1889 being barely half—viz. 10,265—that in October 1888.

It is very remarkable that this marked improvement should have occurred at the time of the great strike at the Docks in 1889. When the dockmen struck work much anxiety was felt by the supporters of the 'Donna,' fearing extreme pressure on the food trucks. For, as the Editor wrote in October 1889, their resources would speedily be exhausted if the strikers should consider themselves 'out-of-works' and come for halfpenny dinners in thousands; besides which 'the question would arise whether it would be right to employ money subscribed for the benefit of men out of work because there was no work for them to do in feeding men on strike.'

But the difficulty never arose. 'In this remarkable strike the behaviour of the men has throughout been one of the most remarkable features. Instead of rushing to the "Donna," clamour-

ing for halfpenny meals which would enable them to hold out longer, they seem to have felt that this was not the purpose for which the "Donna" was maintained, and that, in their conflict with their employers, to avail themselves of relief which was not intended for them would not be fair.¹ The result, as has been said, was a large diminution of the demand at the 'Donna' in 1889, partly accounted for by the fact that many of the halfpennies paid by the out-of-works were given them by those in work, and, when the latter were on strike, they needed all the pence they possessed. All this made it a matter of great satisfaction to those responsible for the 'Donna' that her work had come triumphantly out of the great trial of the strike. The Sisters were allowed by the strikers to take their food into the Docks, though they would not allow others to do so. Sometimes they threatened to upset the food-truck, but they never did so, though they knew we were feeding the so-called 'blacklegs.' This pleased us much, as it showed that the men trusted us, and knew us to be their friends.

By the end of 1890 we were again happily able to report that the 'Donna' had done distinctly less business than last year. The takings were more than 80*l.* less, a diminution of over 25 per cent. This was highly satisfactory, because it corresponded with the diminution in the amount of casual labour employed at the Docks. Sixteen shillings in halfpence were taken in 1890, twenty shillings a day having been taken a year previously.

'The past year has been a somewhat disappointing one in the history of the Donna,' the Editor wrote at the end of 1891. 'The trade done has been somewhat in excess of the amount of last year. The object of this charity—as of all charities rightly conducted—is to minimise an evil; and while it is a matter for satisfaction that our resources have been equal to the calls that have been made on them, it is a matter for deep regret that the calls should have been so great.'

Seven thousand portions had been served in the year, in excess of the number for the previous twelve months, and, though this was not a great rise, we had hoped that the reduction in the amount of casual labour employed at the docks and wharves, and the increase in the number of permanent hands, would have enabled us to show a different result. For, unlike most sellers, we ever reckoned that, the fewer customers we had,

¹ LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE, VOL. XIV. P. '65.

the more successful was the work of the 'Donna' and of the Night Refuge. For the latter 79*l.* 11*s.* was sent in 1891 by the readers of LONGMAN'S; besides large contributions of clothes, mufflers, socks, &c.

'Eminently satisfactory' was the Editor's verdict on our work in 1892, the number of our customers being less by nearly 20,000 than in the previous year. It was impossible to say to what cause this was due. In part, perhaps, the Editor thought, to the fact that the demand for casual labour at the Docks was diminished owing to the new regulations in force; in part, possibly, to the effect of the Night Refuge, by means of which men are occasionally lifted permanently out of the most hopeless class; in part, perhaps, to General Booth's operations.

At no time since the work began were such widespread expressions of sympathy received from distant lands as this year, from India, New South Wales, South Australia, &c. 'We always read with the deepest interest,' one kind donor at Adelaide wrote, 'all the articles in LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE on the subject. 'We have no such poverty in this colony as is relieved by the "Donna," so that, although we probably do not in the least realise what it is, it strikes us with more horror than those who are more accustomed to it.' Altogether 449*l.* 15*s.* 11*d.* was this year sent by readers of LONGMAN'S.

'It really appears possible to look forward to a time when the "Donna" may suspend operations, having served her purpose,' the Editor wrote in 1893, during which year the number of men served had sunk from 85,316 to 75,418. Besides keeping up the 'Donna,' the readers of LONGMAN'S sent 115*l.* 13*s.* for the Night Refuge and the Workroom, and close on the same amount in 1894, during which year the number served at the 'Donna' rose very slightly—only by 400; but at one time the distress was so acute that free tickets were issued, and a large hunk of bread added *gratis* to every dinner as long as the supplies held out: 15,255 of these were given during seven weeks of the worst distress. Famished creatures stood near the 'halfpenny tarbly-do,'¹ eyeing the food, without a farthing in their pockets, and the squeezing, pushing, and hustling at this time were painful to witness, for every man feared the bread would not hold out till his turn came: as a rule, they are most orderly, waiting patiently to be served.

'The annual account of the "Donna" for the past year is the most encouraging that has been presented for many years' could

¹ *Table d'hôte.*

happily be reported for the year 1895, the *highest* number served in a month (November) during the previous twelve months being 7,976, a thousand less than the *lowest* number served in a month (June 1888) seven years previously.

The almost arctic winter and spring of 1895 brought increased offerings from the readers of this Magazine, 625*l.* 9*s.* 9*d.* having been sent to the Editor for the 'Donna,' Night Refuge, and Workroom, besides 60*l.* to the writer. 'There can be no doubt,' as the Editor wrote, 'that the "Donna" provided the possibility of tiding over bad times for many a poor fellow who, but for this help, must have gone under.'

'The registry of numbers at the close of 1896 showed a diminution of nearly 21,000 customers from those of the preceding twelve months, a source of great satisfaction,' as we then wrote, 'since it is an approach to the desirable end, of the "Donna" being no longer needed.'

Ten years ago the Sisters sent to different parts of East London four food-trucks daily for the unemployed, namely, the 'Don,' the 'Donna,' the 'Dark Green,' and the 'Cage,' besides two to those in work. They have given up all these except the 'Donna,' which has been supported by LONGMAN'S, and which has survived the first of them, her mate the 'Don,' for more than a year. I rejoice that her work will continue through this winter at least.

The 'Donna Knitting Society' will continue permanently. It has but ONE RULE: *To send at least one PAIR OF WOOLLEN SOCKS, muffler, or vest, in knitting, crochet, or woollen material, every winter, to Miss Trench, Secretary, D.K.S., Pulham St. Mary, Norfolk.* Mufflers should be a yard and a half long and twelve inches wide. A large number are sent to the Night Refuge, and on one evening given to all the men present. [Their pleasure in the warmth, softness, and bright colours of the comforters (truly so called) is very great; they think a great deal of the last quality, crimson being perhaps their favourite colour. Too many 'woollies' cannot be sent, as the demand for them and for old clothes, both at the Night Refuge and at other centres of help to men, far exceeds the supply. New members for the D.K.S. are much needed.

'Now and again,' a Sister wrote, 'some extra treat brings rejoicing into the Refuge; as, for example, when the woollen scarves and socks sent by kindly readers of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE were distributed.

'Last December it was on a specially wet, cold, cheerless night that these treasures were bestowed. The men knew nothing about what was in store for them; it had been kept a profound secret purposely, and, as pleasant surprises are extremely rare with them, the delight was proportionately great.

'Poor fellows! How dreary they looked as they shuffled in that night, their shoulders wet and clammy, their boots sodden!

'Then, when the choice was offered to each one—a scarf or a pair of socks—the sudden brightening of downcast faces was a thing not to be easily forgotten by the onlookers.

'Some seemed to think it could not really be meant for them, and many a hearty "God bless you! Thank the ladies for us, Sister," was heard.'

'We're used to waiting,' words said once at the door of the Night Refuge before the hour for opening it. What a sense of bitter trial is conveyed to our minds by them! Work may be hard and wearying, still, there is the feeling of gaining by it, as well as the satisfaction of employment. But the almost hopeless waiting in idleness! What must not the strain be on a man's heart and nerves and moral condition, to say nothing of bodily privation! There may be vagrants who prefer the chance of casual labour with high wages to steady, constant work, or who have lost the latter by their own fault. I know by my own personal knowledge that this is not the case with many of those who are reduced to come for food to the 'Donna,' for shelter to the 'Friend in Need,' and I know how well men have responded to efforts to help them permanently. Oftentimes a very little timely help, such as the gift or cheap sale of decent second-hand clothes, is needed to give a man a fresh and successful start in life.

One of the greatest benefits of night refuges is the opportunity it gives for becoming acquainted with special cases, and often setting them permanently on their feet again. I think that a gentleman or lady would probably never go to the 'Friend in Need' in Tenter Street, Whitechapel, without finding, after a little talk with the men, some one or more 'forlorn and shipwrecked brother' whom they could put in the way of earning a living.

'I have known him for many years, and could trust him with untold gold,' was the answer from a referee as to one of these men.

The caretaker at the Night Refuge said he had first heard of the 'Donna' when many hundred miles away from London. The whole number served during the last twelve months gives an

average of 134 each day, a large diminution indeed from that of over 424 daily in 1887-8. That the food truck was only a temporary expedient has been steadily kept in view and before his readers' minds by the Editor, who with so much kindness and constant generosity has kept these pages open for its support, feeling that, 'fortunately, human mercy is less logical than strict economists.'

There are few things more notable in the book which all the world is reading—the story of a great poet—than his deep insight into the sufferings of the poor and his heartfelt compassion for them. In 1890 he wrote: 'Trench said to me, when we were at Trinity together, "Tennyson, we cannot live in art." The Palace of Art is the embodiment of my own belief, that the God-like life is *with* man and *for* man ; that

Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That never can be sunder'd without tears ;
And he that shuts out Love, in turn shall be
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie
Howling in outer darkness.'¹

He heard, in his first youth, the 'still sad music of humanity,' and, hearkening faithfully, found in it one of the noblest motives of his song, and a chief source of his power to touch the heart of England. In the early 'dawn-golden days' of companionship with the friend whose memory he was to immortalise they refused to allow the glow of poetic vision and inspiration to dazzle and blind their eyes to the comfortless troubles of the needy, or to shut their ears to the deep sighing of the poor.

They 'touched on all imaginable subjects. The unsettled conditions of the country and the misery of the poorer classes weighed upon them. It seemed difficult to young men starting in life to know how to remedy these evils, *but they determined not to lose sight of the Real in seeking the Ideal.*'²

¹ *Life of Lord Tennyson*, vol. i. p. 118. 'Alfred Tennyson and Richard Chenevix Trench had been friends at Cambridge, and had a common love of poetry. Soon after his ordination the future Archbishop paid a visit to the future Laureate. He spoke about the new heresy which substituted Art for Faith, and Beauty for Sanctity. His brother-poet, it is said, contested nothing, but simply listened, occasionally replenishing his pipe. When Trench had taken his departure the auditor took up his pen, and the single thought became a poem. Later the same thought was illustrated by Trench in two poems, viz. : "The Prize of Song," one of the stateliest lyrics of modern times, and a noble representative of Hellenic song ; and, secondly, in a sonnet beginning, "What good soever in thy heart or mind?"—See also Appendix, vol. i. pp. 505-6.

² *Ibid.* p. 83.

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'Some seemed to think it could not really be meant for them, and many a hearty "God bless you! Thank the ladies for us, Sister," was heard.'

'We're used to waiting,' words said once at the door of the Night Refuge before the hour for opening it. What a sense of bitter trial is conveyed to our minds by them! Work may be hard and wearying, still, there is the feeling of gaining by it, as well as the satisfaction of employment. But the almost hopeless waiting in idleness! What must not the strain be on a man's heart and nerves and moral condition, to say nothing of bodily privation! There may be vagrants who prefer the chance of casual labour with high wages to steady, constant work, or who have lost the latter by their own fault. I know by my own personal knowledge that this is not the case with many of those who are reduced to come for food to the 'Donna,' for shelter to the 'Friend in Need,' and I know how well men have responded to efforts to help them permanently. Oftentimes a very little timely help, such as the gift or cheap sale of decent second-hand clothes, is needed to give a man a fresh and successful start in life.

One of the greatest benefits of night refuges is the opportunity it gives for becoming acquainted with special cases, and often setting them permanently on their feet again. I think that a gentleman or lady would probably never go to the 'Friend in Need' in Tenter Street, Whitechapel, without finding, after a little talk with the men, some one or more 'forlorn and shipwrecked brother' whom they could put in the way of earning a living.

'I have known him for many years, and could trust him with untold gold,' was the answer from a referee as to one of these men.

The caretaker at the Night Refuge said he had first heard of the 'Donna' when many hundred miles away from London. The whole number served during the last twelve months gives an

average of 134 each day, a large diminution indeed from that of over 424 daily in 1887-8. That the food truck was only a temporary expedient has been steadily kept in view and before his readers' minds by the Editor, who with so much kindness and constant generosity has kept these pages open for its support, feeling that, 'fortunately, human mercy is less logical than strict economists.'

There are few things more notable in the book which all the world is reading—the story of a great poet—than his deep insight into the sufferings of the poor and his heartfelt compassion for them. In 1890 he wrote: 'Trench said to me, when we were at Trinity together, "Tennyson, we cannot live in art." The Palace of Art is the embodiment of my own belief, that the God-like life is *with* man and for man ; that

Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That never can be sunder'd without tears ;
And he that shuts out Love, in turn shall be
Shut out from Love, and on her threshold lie
Howling in outer darkness.'¹

He heard, in his first youth, the 'still sad music of humanity,' and, hearkening faithfully, found in it one of the noblest motives of his song, and a chief source of his power to touch the heart of England. In the early 'dawn-golden days' of companionship with the friend whose memory he was to immortalise they refused to allow the glow of poetic vision and inspiration to dazzle and blind their eyes to the comfortless troubles of the needy, or to shut their ears to the deep sighing of the poor.

They 'touched on all imaginable subjects. The unsettled conditions of the country and the misery of the poorer classes weighed upon them. It seemed difficult to young men starting in life to know how to remedy these evils, but they determined not to lose sight of the Real in seeking the Ideal.'²

¹ *Life of Lord Tennyson*, vol. i. p. 118. 'Alfred Tennyson and Richard Chenevix Trench had been friends at Cambridge, and had a common love of poetry. Soon after his ordination the future Archbishop paid a visit to the future Laureate. He spoke about the new heresy which substituted Art for Faith, and Beauty for Sanctity. His brother-poet, it is said, contested nothing, but simply listened, occasionally replenishing his pipe. When Trench had taken his departure the auditor took up his pen, and the single thought became a poem. Later the same thought was illustrated by Trench in two poems, viz.: "The Prize of Song," one of the stateliest lyrics of modern times, and a noble representative of Hellenic song ; and, secondly, in a sonnet beginning, "What good soever in thy heart or mind?"—See also Appendix, vol. i. pp. 505-6.

² *Ibid.* p. 83.

May this be the manner of our quest after whatever vision we have seen ! It is true, as has been said before, that there are few things harder than to give without doing harm : the difficulty lies in the very conditions of our existence here, of this mingled web of good and ill. And yet the old words, 'Bear ye one another's burdens,' keep their force, and eagerness to help others would seem the most natural attitude of mind for those upon whom the imperative need of help to bear their own burdens will certainly come sooner or later, be they rich or poor.

O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this ! ¹

must be the cry of many a heart in reading true tales of 'houseless heads and unfed sides,' and 'loop'd and window'd raggedness.' If once 'a deep distress' in the thought of others' sufferings have 'humanised the soul,' it will issue in action which no disappointments, no faults in those we try to help, can paralyse. Better and more lasting ways of helping them can be and will be found than the temporary assistance of the 'Donna,' if only we do not forget the poor helpless man, lest haply our carelessness slay those that are vexed at the heart. If we, too, determine not to lose sight of the Real in seeking the Ideal, we can scarcely fail to find that there is nothing more real than the sufferings of the poor.

What good soever in thy heart or mind
Doth yet no higher source nor fountain own
Than thine own self, nor bow to other throne,
Suspect and fear ; although therein thou find
High purpose to go forth and bless thy kind,
Or in the awful temple of thy soul
To worship what is loveliest, and control
The ill within, and by strong laws to bind.
Good is of God—no good is therefore sure
Which has dared wander from its source away ;
Laws without sanction will not long endure,
Love will grow faint and fainter day by day,
And Beauty from the straight path will allure,
And weakening first, will afterwards betray.²

¹ King Lear.

² Archbishop Trench.

At the Sign of the Ship.

THE journal named the *Academy* is playing, like the *Pall Mall Gazette* long ago, and like Mr. Gosse in an agreeable but frivolous essay, at the old Academy game. Some person or persons select a Forty, other people of leisure criticise it, and Mr. Punch mocks at it. It is not easy to understand the rules of the game. Do the self-appointed electors choose people whom they think the forty most learned, ingenious, and well-graced writers in the Isle of Albion? Or do they try to guess a list of the forty people who would have most chance if elections were conducted on the French principle? In France, when a vacancy occurs, a candidate goes round to members canvassing for votes, and elections must be swayed by personal motives of all kinds. Many of us here, I hope, could not, and would not, ask for votes, not though a kind of official immortality, and (I believe) some small pay for attendance, and a green coat with gold trimmings, were to be the prize of success. No, we could not do it, and M. Daudet does not run this gauntlet.

In France, learning of all kinds, style, wit, are rewarded by the *fauteuils*, and it is plain that pleasant personal qualities, high social or clerical position, and so forth, are not neglected. Popular electors are apt to choose their private favourites—popular novelists, most likely, who would have little chance in France. Gautier, Molière, Dumas, were not elected, and M. Zola vainly pulsates at the doors. Let me play the game as it is played in France, and choose, not the forty whom I think most deserving, but the forty who would, perhaps, have a good chance on the French principle:

Mr. Gladstone.
Dean Farrar.
The Bishop of Ripon.
The Bishop of London.
The Bishop of Chester.

The Macchailean Mohr.
Mr. James Knowles.
Mr. Herbert Spencer.
Sir Henry Irving.
Mr. George Meredith.

Mr. Ruskin.	Mr. Leslie Stephen.
Lord Acton.	Dr. J. H. Murray.
Professor Masson.	Mr. Binning Monro.
Professor Butcher.	Mr. Francis Galton.
Professor Bryce.	Dr. Fairbairn.
Professor Jebb.	Mr. Alfred Austin.
Professor Mahaffy.	Mr. Swinburne.
Professor Courthope.	Mr. Lecky.
Lord Rayleigh.	Mr. Thomas Hardy.
Sir W. Crookes.	Mr. Morley.
Lord Kelvin.	Mr. Max Müller.
Sir Robert Ball.	Sir George Trevelyan.
Mr. Robert Bridges.	Mr. A. J. Balfour.
Mr. S. R. Gardiner.	Professor Sidgwick.
Mr. E. B. Tylor.	Mr. Frederic Harrison.

* * *

The Academy would consist of these names, or of a list very like this. Where, my impetuous young literary friends, are *your* lions of the interview, and the advertisement, and the paragraph? They are not in it, and would not be in it. There is not one literary gent. in the Forty, unless Mr. Stephen and Mr. Harrison may accept that title. There are only two or three writers whose books have any kind of popularity. Now, if we had an Academy in England, angry passions would arise in popular and other breasts. Unkind things would be written every day about my Immortals, and about whomsoever they chose to fill a vacant place. He would be a cleric, a professor, a peer, or a scientific character; he would never be a creation of 'booms' and puffs, never an idol of the circulating libraries, or a pillar of the six-shilling novel at the bookstalls. I do not say that popular novelists and minor poets in limited editions always deserve exclusion. Very far from it. There are pleasant writers in the French Academy—M. Anatole France and M. Jules Lemaître, for example—but they would have rather less chance in our country. My list, I repeat, is not that which I would make to suit my private taste, and ladies are omitted in deference to French precedent. Of one thing I am certain: an English Academy would not lend a breath of favouring gale to many of the writers whose names, like patent soaps and fountain pens, and for the same reason, are most familiar to 'the reading public.' Nonconformist, dissenting, unofficial academies would have to be got up for the benefit of these persons

of genius. Everything would be jealousy and envy ; and then imagine the pleasure of going canvassing ! I think of presenting myself, for instance, before Lord Kelvin—or Mr. Max Müller—or a bishop, unless he were an old friend of unregenerate days. Long-haired poets would get little encouragement out of Mr. Herbert Spencer, and the clergy would soon dispose of your emancipated novelists. Mr. Henley soliciting the vote and interest of a bishop would be an example of unappreciated greatness, and it would be pleasing to see Mr. ——'s call on Mr. Swinburne. Many of the Academicians would never have heard the names of the literary candidates. Then the books that would be *couronnés*—the literary gentlemen would never have heard of *them*. In brief, an Academy does not exist in the interests of what the public calls Literature, but in the interests of learning, research, science, style, and such trifles. The French Academy has refused to sit in judgment on music-hall songs and assign a prize to the best. Thus do they regard their austere duties.

* * *

Persons who find pleasure in truly 'creepy' ghost stories should try Mr. Stead's collection, *Real Ghost Stories*. I don't know whether the ghosts are real. Personally, I think many of them would not 'go to a jury,' but the stories are real and very well told. There is a jolly bogle who played hide and seek in a room, and threw things out of the window, which may be recommended. A number of the spirits, like the Goblin Page, slink to the kitchen ; they have no false pride about them. Nonconformist and Catholic bogles are more numerous than Anglican *revenants*. Mr. Stead's own experiences in Hermitage Castle, and in the way of 'premonitions,' do not excite the reader much ; one would expect him to have had more personal adventures with the bodiless. His lady friends, however, are full of matter. Somehow women are much more favoured than men in this way, and I suspect that dogs are more favoured than women.

* * *

Go to the ant, thou psychical researcher ! If ants cannot communicate information to each other in some way not understood, nobody can. Thus Mr. Hague, the geologist, writes to Mr. Darwin that he killed two or three ants of a crowd which were climbing up his chimneypiece on to the mantelshelf. After that the advancing ants stopped at the lower bevelled edge of the shelf,

whence they could not see their deceased friends. 'They somehow became aware of trouble, and turned about.' The pluckiest persevered, climbed the ledge, saw the corpses of their comrades, and ran away, 'expressing great terror and excitement.' I conceive that the ants saw phantasms of their late departed friends, and therefore turned tail, while the pluckier or more scientific ant exclaimed, 'Ghosts—bosh!' and persevered. For if it was scent that gave warning, the plucky ants would possess the sense of smell as keenly as their timid companions. But nobody knows how ants communicate information while alive. There is something uncanny about them.

This reminds me that Sir John Lubbock was left out of my Academy. I therefore scratch Mr. Swinburne, who does not love such laurels.

* * *

It is impossible to review here Mr. Butler's *Authoress of the Odyssey*. Mr. Butler conceives that she drew Scheria, where Nausicaa lived, from Trapani, in Sicily, whence she also drew Ithaca. Thus Odysseus sailed from Troy round Sicily. In these latitudes he naturally met Læstrygonians, living on a fiord in the Land of the Midnight Sun, and practising cannibalism. However, it is most curious that a rock outside the harbour of Trapani is said to have been a Turkish war-vessel, turned into stone by the Madonna, as was, by Poseidon, the ship of the Phœaciens in Homer. There is, alas, no river at Trapani! Now it was in the river of Scheria that Odysseus found refuge, after praying to the stream. Mr. Butler rejoices in 'the absence of any river' in Trapani, but there was a very good river in Scheria. Trapani also presents a treasure-cave (like that of Odysseus in Ithaca); 'a cattle-driver went in to explore it, but never came back.' This is our old friend the piper, who explores, and never comes back from, Mackinnon's Cave, in Mull, and many other Scottish caves and subterranean passages. In Italy, as in Asia and Scotland, treasure is as common as blackberries, only you can never find it. I do not see that, if the authoress did sketch both Scheria and Ithaca from parts of Trapani, there need be any trouble about Odysseus finding out that he had only sailed a mile or two. Theoretically, the Ithacan part of Trapani was at a vast distance. Mr. Butler disposes of the Læstrygonians and midnight sun (as I consider it) by invent-

ing 'a poor little prehistoric joke.' I am inclined to suppose that travellers' tales of the Far North had reached Greece, with the amber, by the Sacred Way. As to the idea of identifying Sicanians with Kikones, I leave it, with Mr. Butler's derivation of Læstrygona, to the tender mercies of philologists. Kappa is not pronounced like Sigma in Greek, nor, therefore, are Sicanians and Kikones allied in sound. Things become intolerably mixed when Phœaciens are conjecturally identified with Phœceans and with seals (*Phoca*). When Thucydides talks of Phocians, we are to be sure that he means Phœceans, just as if Austrians were to be taken for Australians. Here arises a point of Greek scholarship which must be settled by better grammarians than ever I was. In my poor opinion, Odysseus sailed into Fairy Land, when he left the Lotus-Eaters, and I would as soon look for Hades, or the Cimmerians, as for the real Scheria. Had the ship-rock legend been current in ancient Greece, it could scarcely have escaped the curiosity of Greek antiquarians. If an author could introduce a river where there is none, he, or she, could also invent or adapt hills and isles at pleasure. As for the arguments that the author of the *Odyssey* was a woman, I shall not weary the reader with them; but I think I could make out as good a case for attributing the *Volsung Saga* to a lady. Mr. Butler is ingenious enough to aid destructive German criticism of the *Odyssey*, but the Teutonic theories are at least more plausible than his, when we come to a hunt for discrepancies in the epic. He seems to mean to translate the *Odyssey*. If he does it in this manner, 'I cannot bring myself to strip before a number of good-looking young women,' he will lose part of the charm. Besides, the speaker could not 'strip;' he had no clothes on, but covered his naked body with the bough of a tree. One would need many pages for a detailed review of Mr. Butler's book. He complains of not being answered or taken seriously. I regret that I have of yore taken German examples of ingenuity with too much seriousness. As far as Mr. Butler agrees with Kirchhoff, what I have been so superfluous as to say about Kirchhoff applies to the new theory. I do not remember what I said, but it satisfied me at the time, and Mr. Butler, if he is curious, will find it in a work called *Homer and the Epic*. It has always seemed to me that if discrepancy hunters would try their hands on most modern novels, they would find these quite as rich in errors as the Greek epics. We are to imagine that a girl of Trapani, about 1100-1000, wrote the *Odyssey*, modifying her original plan, and that Hellas took

seriously what was sport to her. One would like to know what became of the poem in the next four hundred years, and how it got from Sicily into general circulation.

One little point must be taken. Mr. Butler gives, as samples of his young lady's borrowings from the *Iliad*, two passages of the *Iliad* with references to their parallels in the *Odyssey*. Thus we have details of a sacrifice; nightfall and dawn; a ship setting sail; another sacrifice; a banquet; a reception of guests; cleansing a body, dead or alive; ceremonious addresses to strangers. Now all these examples of stock passages have parallels in the ancient poetry of other peoples; they are *formulae*. There is no reason to suppose that the author of the *Iliad* invented them; they are epic commonplaces. And if we had other Greek poems out of the heroic age, we would probably find the formulae in all of them. I have no theory as to the authorship of either poem, but I think it very probable that in the work of an early Greek who never heard either poem recited—indeed, who lived before they existed—we should find the same old stock passages as those which we have noted.

Our own poetry has its traditional conventions in the matter of rhyme.

RHYME OF RHYMES.

Wild on the mountain peak the wind
Repeats its old refrain,
Like ghosts of mortals who have sinned,
And fain would sin again.

For 'wind' I do not rhyme to 'mind,'
Like many mortal men,
'Again' (when one reflects) 'twere kind
To rhyme as if 'agen.'

I never met a single soul
Who spoke of 'wind' as 'wined,'
And yet we use it, on the whole,
To rhyme to 'find' and 'blind.'

We say, 'Now don't do that *agen'*,
 When people give us pain ;
 In poetry, nine times in ten,
 It rhymes to 'Spain' or 'Dane.'

Oh, which is wrong or which is right ?
 Oh, which is right or wrong ?
 The sounds in prose familiar, quite,
 Or those we meet in song ?

To hold that 'love' can rhyme to 'prove'
 Requires some force of will,
 Yet in the ancient lyric groove
 We meet them rhyming still.

This was our learned fathers' wont
 In prehistoric times.
 We follow it, or if we don't,
 We oft run short of rhymes.

* * *

I wish some methodical persons would make what Mr. Darwin used to call 'a fool's experiment'— that is, an experiment which seems quite absurd. Nothing can be simpler: you merely shuffle a pack of cards, backs up, cut them at random, with your eyes shut, and guess the card. At this game I have played pretty frequently, and I would certainly have made a very good thing out of anyone who had laid the odds—51 to 1. The method is to let a card appear before your mind's eye, and then choose it. Things appear very dimly and vaguely before my mind's eye, and I have been in doubt whether I 'saw,' say, seven of clubs or seven of diamonds. I have risked 'diamonds,' and been right; at other times it has been the right number of pips in the wrong suit, or queen for knave. I have found it to be the same with other guessers. A curious thing is that only in the first two or three guesses does one seem to have any chance of being right, beyond the regular ratio of chance. Mr. Zangwill found this to be the case when the guessers guessed by a planchette or by tilting a table, except when the table scored five bull's-eyes out of eight shots. He set it down to a possible extreme delicacy of touch, easily fatigued. But you may make somebody else cut, and do the guessing. Besides, the edges of the cards, if you cut yourself, can surely yield no indications. I

have heard of people who, by practice, could distinguish the cards by feeling the backs, which yield no indications to me. Either there is some power of guessing, or I have been wasting a run of luck when there was 'nothing on.' The 'fool's experiment' is easily made; witnesses of undeniable reputation, however, would be desirable. Probably most amateurs will feel that, if they keep a formal account, any luck they may have will be lost, which looks very like a concealed opinion that they cheat themselves, remember successes, and forget failures. I was arguing the point with a friend, and said, 'Now guess which of the books on these two shelves (thirty-six in all) I have chosen.' He guessed right, and wasted a 35-1 chance, as there was no betting. In the card experiment, nobody should know the card that is to be chosen. Three guesses a day are quite enough. Of course, guessing the number at roulette is actual prophecy, and quite another affair. One has seen a great deal of money made at it, but on the whole this scientific experiment is demonstrably disastrous at Monte Carlo. The Administration would probably let you bring in a planchette to direct your play, but one has never seen this system actually tried at the tables.

* * *

Here is an instance of intelligence in the dog. A friend of mine has a Scotch terrier, aged seventeen months. One day he shut him up in a room next that where he was sitting, engaged in official duties. On the table he had left a box of some kind of concentrated beef lozenges equivalent, he thinks, to a middle-sized ox. After some time he went into the room for the lozenges. The box had vanished. At last he found it, empty, pushed beneath the fender. The dog did not recover its appetite for about a week. Its intelligence was displayed, not in eating the equivalent of an ox, but in hiding the empty box, and hiding it cleverly too. Animals are always most intelligent, one fears, when most depraved.

* * *

I have commented before on the curious fact that, while we have many thousands of persons who write verse, and send it in MS. to everybody, yet poets who print cannot sell a hundred copies. This might be attributed to the honourable poverty of poets. But statistics show that poems are not even taken out at lending libraries to any degree. I don't think I ever saw in my life a book of poems with the label of the circulating library. Somebody, re-

porting on village libraries, says, 'Poetry is *never* asked for.' Yet thousands of people go on writing poetry, thousands who neither buy, nor borrow, still less steal, the published poetry of others. I think I do not exaggerate when I say that lately, on two consecutive days, I put seven volumes of poetry, presentation copies, into their long home in the waste-paper basket. But some of them were American. The whole subject of an enormous supply, kept up in face of absolutely no demand whatever, but contrariwise, is an economic mystery. It is not like novel writing. There are some prizes in novel writing—and the mass of mankind, not unjustly conceiving that they cannot possibly write worse than several of our most popular and preached-about romancers, try their own hands at fiction; 'Hit or miss—luck's all,' they say, like the old sign of the old inn. This is intelligible. But the prizes in poetry are not drawn once in twenty years, and, at best are of no great pecuniary value. Still, people keep on writing poetry, though they never read it. The people who read good poetry—there are some—do not write, or certainly do not publish their effusions.

* * *

A propos of water-finding by the divining rod, a correspondent refers me to Numbers xxi. 18. The inspired writer there cites his *Quellen*, a kind of history of Israel in lyrics, called 'The Book of the Wars of the Lord.' Hence he quotes a *chanson* on a well, called Beer, which the Lord promised to show to Moses in the wilderness. The original Hebrew is no doubt very archaic, and the translation in the Revised Version does not make sense.

Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it,
The well which the princes digged,
Which the nobles of the people delved,
With the sceptre

[*Or, by order of the law-giver]*

and with their staves.

You cannot, I conceive, dig a well with walking-sticks, much less with a sceptre. The verse, which begins like a charm-song, may, possibly, mean that the well was discovered *à la* Mullins, by aid of the divining rod. At all events, the English is not sense as it stands. These things are very old. I have just discovered that Numa Pompilius was a 'scryer,' and saw visions of spirits in water. St. Augustine says so, on the authority of Varro, and he takes an unfavourable sense of Numa's experiments in induced hallucination.

I hope the following anecdote is true ; it is so romantic, and reminds one of *Christabel* :

But vainly thou warrest,
For this is alone in
Thy power to declare,
That in the dim forest
Thou heardst a low moaning,
And saw'st a bright lady surpassingly fair.

A young gallant pricked his bicycle forth

Without step or stay down the muddy way

that leads from the West Port of St. Andrews to StrathTyrum. In the shadow of the woods he met a bright being, like a lady from a far country, at whom he gazed with respectful admiration. She replied with a glance so bewitching that he leaped from selle to ground, and began a dalliance in the old style of the twelfth-century French lyrics. There is something ineffably bland and vernal in this interlude ; sweet old rhymes dance through the brain as one broods fondly on the *Oaristys*. The maiden expressed a desire to learn to cycle, and the cavalier, leaping into his saddle, sped back to St. Andrews ('tis but a measured mile), and hired the best lady's mount procurable, for two hours. Throwing down a handful of zecchins, he spurred back to his tryst, where the mystic lady waited. He had the intoxicating privilege of guiding her first artless efforts to find her pedals, his arm encircled her dainty waist, the light breeze mingled their floating locks : 'the meadow sweet lightened with laughter,'—and no wonder. After a few attempts, the fair pilgrim craved leave to try a jaunt by herself : the cavalier proudly watched her first graceful wobbles. Recovering confidence, she sped nimbly round the corner, and she has not been seen since, nor has the bicycle, at least by any one who chooses to furnish the police with a clue. My authority for a fairy legend which I have tried to tell in words not wholly inadequate is the local newspaper. In my own opinion, the lady was no vulgar bicycle thief, but one of the spiritual women of the woodlands, whose embraces are fatal. The romantic Gael knows them in Glenfinlas; also the shy Samoan and the untutored Kaneka. Were I the young man, I would certainly insure my life ; for his days will be not long, if my theory is correct. In any case he has to pay for that bicycle.

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Miss Kaye, D.K.S., 16 scarves, 4 pairs cuffs, 17 pairs of socks. From 'Zierriah, comforters (Night Refuge). Per Miss Trench, D.K.S., 22 pairs of socks, 2 chest protectors, 12 mitts, 66 mufflers, 2 crossovers, 1 cap, 1 pair knee-caps. From M. E. H., 5 comforters, 3 pairs of socks, 3 muffatees. 'R. M. E.' Tooting, 1*s.* comforter, socks, mitts. Chest of tea from Mr. Ruskin, per Allen Bros., London Wall.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Editor requests that his correspondents will be good enough to write to him informing him of the subject of any article they wish to offer, before sending the MS. A stamped and addressed envelope should accompany the MS. if the writer wishes it to be returned in case of non-acceptance. The Editor can in no case hold himself responsible for accidental loss. All communications should be addressed to

*The Editor of LONGMAN'S MAGAZINE,
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